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NATIONAL REVIEW

Our Nuclear Future

SAFE AND GREEN

by Iain Murray

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NATIONAL REVIEW

JUNE 16, 2008 VOL. LX, NO. 11

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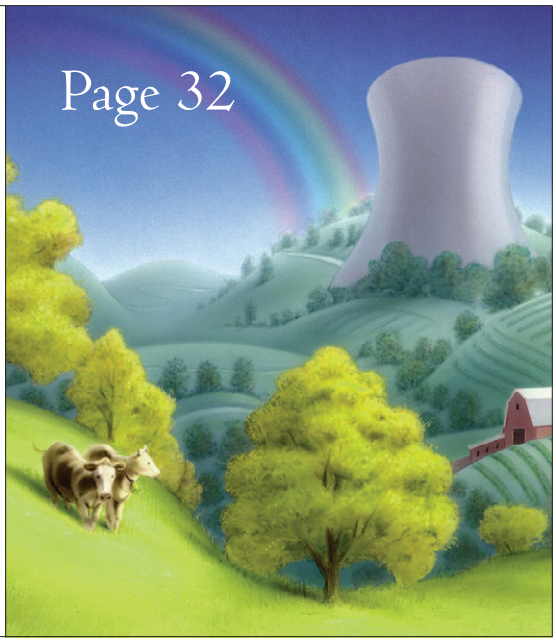
■ COVER STORY

Nuclear Power?

For decades environmentalists have exploited fear and massaged science to make nuclear power morally unacceptable, impeding progress and innovation. Yet today they find their case weakened—perhaps fatally—by another concern born from another campaign of fear: global warming. The hysteria environmentalists have built up around carbon emissions may lead to a new dawn for nuclear power. *By Iain Murray*



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THE TANKER DECISION.

WHY IT DOESN'T ADD UP.

www.boeing.com/tankerfacts

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In March, Boeing filed a formal protest challenging the outcome of the U.S. Air Force KC-X tanker competition. The decision to protest wasn't made lightly. However, the KC-X acquisition process was clouded by fundamental inconsistencies in how the stated requirements were evaluated. As a result, the Air Force selected the Northrop Grumman/European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company KC-30 over the Boeing KC-767—even though the KC-30 is oversized, less capable, more vulnerable and more costly to operate than the KC-767. It doesn't add up.

LET'S LOOK AT THE FACTS.

MISSION CAPABILITY. The KC-767 and the KC-30 received the same overall rating in Mission Capability, despite the fact that the KC-767 had more than three times as many positive "discriminators" (98) as the KC-30 (30). **It doesn't add up.**

COST. The two aircraft cost about the same for development and acquisition. However, the oversized KC-30 requires $49 billion more in total 40-year life cycle costs to operate than the KC-767. **It doesn't add up.**

	Capability	Total Cost	Risk	Size	Past Performance
KC-30	Less	Higher	Higher	Oversized	Marginal
KC-767	More	Lower	Lower	Optimal	Extensive

RISK. Boeing has built and certified more than 2,000 operational tankers and delivered more than 1,800 refueling booms. Northrop Grumman has no tanker experience. Its European partner's experience is minimal and the Air Force found serious weaknesses in the EADS boom design. **It doesn't add up.**

SIZE. The KC-30 platform is significantly larger than the tanker it's supposed to replace, making it more difficult to deploy and far more costly to operate. The increase in size also adds no real capability to the air-refueling mission. **It doesn't add up.**

PAST PERFORMANCE. Boeing has built more than 100 commercially derived military aircraft. Northrop Grumman and EADS don't even come close. And Boeing has already certified and delivered to Japan two KC-767 tankers. **It doesn't add up.**

The facts are clear. Selecting a much larger, more vulnerable, less capable and ultimately more costly aircraft is not in the best interests of the warfighter or the taxpayer. It's a decision that doesn't add up. And one that should not stand.

BOEING

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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letters to the editor

'ASK MICHELLE,' CONTINUED

Rob Long—Will you please forward this letter to Michelle Obama, so that she may consider it for her next advice column?

Dear Michelle:

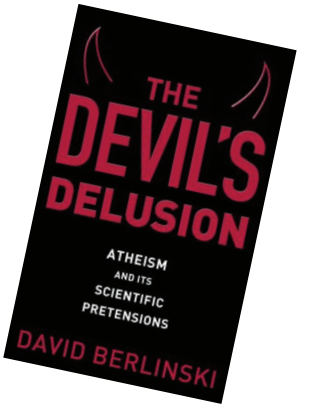
We'll be getting our $600 stimulus check soon, but we're stumped on how to spend it. The little lady thinks we should get a 9 mm Glock, but I had my heart set on the great American classic—the 1911A1 Colt .45 Auto. Either one will fit under my Sunday go-to-Meeting suit, but now the whole congregation has jumped in on the question—I took a poll—and whichever way we go we'll tick off half of them. Lord knows we don't want to make them bitter. What should we do?

GOOD OL' BOY
Via e-mail

MICHELLE OBAMA REPLIES: My heart broke when I read your letter. On the one hand, I'm thrilled that you won't be spending your $600 stimulus check on fatty, deep-fried snacks (though I suspect that at least some of the proceeds will be heading in the direction of a Big Gulp), but on the other hand, it's clear what the "gun" represents. It's a penis. And not yours, either, but the one that belongs to the male lover you can't ever bring yourself to have. That's what's behind all of the guns and the Jesus stuff and the Hardee's Thickburger that I know you're eating right now, as you read this. It's all just so sad.

I AM NOT DEPRAVED

George Gilder has an effusive review of David Berlinski's new book, *The Devil's Delusion*, in your May 5 issue ("Blinkered Sages"). The book sounds interesting, but Gilder writes: "A culture that does not aspire to the divine becomes obsessed with the fascination of evil, reveling in the frivolous, the depraved, and the bestial." The idea of God, he says, is "essential to coherent thought or uplifting culture of any kind."



For shame, sirs. Such hyperbolic language is beneath you. Many Americans who do not believe in God, including yours truly, work hard to live ethical, rational, compassionate, and conservative lifestyles. We are taxpaying, voting, responsible citizens, courageous soldiers, and your allies in the fight against welfare bloat and unnecessary tax hikes. You do yourselves a disservice by disparaging our intellect, our ethics, even our humanity.

Lenora C. O'Toole
Bellingham, Wash.

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Reducing carbon emissions to slow global warming, while growing the world's economy, is a major challenge. In America alone, we will need 25% more electricity in 2030 than we use today and we must expand production while protecting the environment. Meeting this challenge requires technological innovation, such as advanced nuclear power plants, and sound government policy.

Federal action on climate change must involve all sources of greenhouse gases, not just the production of electricity. Furthermore, nuclear energy must be recognized as clean energy in legislative and regulatory proposals that provide incentives for low- or non-emitting electricity generation. Additional production from nuclear energy should receive the same treatment as other carbon-free sources of electricity.

Fortunately, companies have filed permits to build nuclear power plants in Alabama, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. And scores of other projects are on the books for the coming years. Several scientific organizations and noted environmental experts applaud this development. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its 2007 synthesis report identified nuclear energy as a "key mitigation technology" to reduce greenhouse gas emissions both today and tomorrow.

We must take advantage of energy conservation and efficiency, renewable energy expansion and other clean sources of electricity. However, without nuclear energy as part of a solution, America cannot meet the challenge.

Solving the Carbon & Energy Conundrum

nuclear energy is part of the solution

- America's 104 nuclear power plants are responsible for ***54%*** of the electric sector's voluntary carbon reductions.
- Carbon emissions ***prevented*** by nuclear power plants are equivalent to eliminating the emissions from 96% of all U.S. automobiles.
- Simply maintaining nuclear energy's 20% share of the electricity market requires the construction of ***25 new reactors by 2030.***

Nuclear. Clean air energy.

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THE WEEK

■ Linda Douglass is leaving the media to take up a post in the Obama campaign. We wonder if she'll even have to change health plans.

■ What keeps Barack Obama up at night? His fat and happy compatriots. "We can't drive our SUVs and eat as much as we want and keep our homes on 72 degrees at all times . . . and then just expect that other countries are going to say, 'Okay,'" he said on the campaign trail. Instead we should "lead by example" on global warming. Obama was not committing the vulgar fallacy of assuming that the world economy is a zero-sum game, in which every gain is someone else's loss. His analysis was not sophisticated enough for that. He bridles, and therefore assumes that the world bridles, at American prosperity, and believes that we will make ourselves better and others happier by doing without. Add to the emerging personalities of Obama—the racialist, the lefty, the naïf—the noodge.

■ "Public service" is a slippery term that might refer to anything from heroic deeds by military personnel to make-work paper shuffling in pointless federal bureaucracies. In the mouths of Democrats, its meaning tends toward the latter. That is probably the interpretation that should be applied in the case of Obama's 3,000-word commencement address to Wesleyan University, in which the word "service" appeared 15 times. This is of a piece with Michelle Obama's February exhortation to the nation's youth, as reported by our own Byron York: "Don't go into corporate America. . . . Work for the community." Nobody disputes that many kinds of public service are admirable and essential, and that there is nothing ignoble about wanting to "work for the community." Someone has to pay the bills, though. Profit-seeking corporations are the bones and muscles of our economy and the foundation of our country's strength. Their revenues make everything else possible. Do the Obamas understand this? On the evidence of their speeches so far, they do not.

■ Senator Obama blames Rush Limbaugh and Lou Dobbs for doubling the number of hate crimes against Hispanics: "There's a reason why hate crimes against Hispanic people doubled last year," Obama proclaimed, before naming the two commentators. Obama is smearing innocent broadcasters for a crime wave that never happened: No doubling of anti-Hispanic hate crimes took place—the number of such incidents increased about 10 percent last year, and was lower than in 2001. The number of Hispanics in the United States has increased, meaning that all of the things that happen in the course of human events may be expected to happen in proportionally greater totals to American Hispanics, whether it's suffering a crime or becoming an astronaut. Obama should pick his fights more carefully.

See page 8

■ Sen. Edward Kennedy's diagnosis of a malignant brain tumor produced an outpouring of tributes. While we were, are, and will be hostile to his politics, we acknowledge his constancy in pursuit of them. Our prayers and thoughts are with him and his family.

■ George Packer, writing in *The New Yorker*, reports that conservatives are divided and discouraged. Who knew? To our mind, he mischaracterizes the conservative division in a way that exaggerates it. On his telling, older conservatives seek a return to Reaganism while younger conservative "reformers," some of them associated with NR, want to make a clean break with it. In truth what the reformers want, most of them, is to apply conservative principles to contemporary circumstances, which is precisely what Reagan did. Their elders' chief concern is that the principles not be compromised. The divide is bridgeable, the disagreement productive—more so, let us hope, than Packer might wish.

ROMAN GENN

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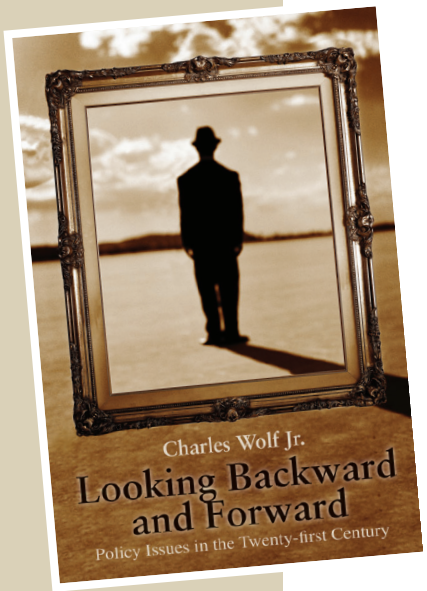

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The Week...

■ President Bush recently drew attention to a dog not barking: He has not played golf since 2003. He said, "I don't want some mom whose son may have recently died to see the commander in chief playing golf. I feel I owe it to the families to be in solidarity as best as I can with them. . . . I think playing golf during a war just sends the wrong signal." As usual, the president's instincts are utterly honorable. But he has no problem biking around in those colorful little shorts. And he has no problem with other forms of recreation, either. Golf is weirdly and wrongly stigmatized. And our boys in conflict have played it for years. They're undoubtedly playing it in Iraq right now, in some makeshift way. Bush is right to think about image and perception. But sometimes image and perception, like the law, are an ass.

■ "We won the recount, and they won the movie," says Republican lawyer Ben Ginsberg of the new HBO picture *Recount*. Back in 2000, Ginsberg played a major role in George W. Bush's Florida recount effort, and now HBO has given his character a big part in the movie version. Of course, Ginsberg is portrayed as a villain, along with everyone else on the Bush team; in the world of *Recount*, Al Gore really won the election but was stopped by thuggish Republicans and corrupt Supreme Court justices at just the moment when the counting would have proved his victory. In the end, according to *Recount*, Team Gore was just too good and virtuous, and Team Bush too cutthroat, for justice to be done. To call this revisionist history would be too kind. The film contains not a word about those painstaking media recounts proving that, if the vote tallying had continued exactly as Gore wanted it to, then the winner would have been . . . George W. Bush. "This is a fairy tale that didn't come true for them," says Ginsberg. Which is why they had to make a fairy-tale movie.

■ Drawing upon substantial support from congressional Republicans, the House and Senate overrode President Bush's veto of the farm bill, thereby enacting an expansion of farm subsidies at a time when high food prices have sent farm incomes 51 percent higher than their previous ten-year average. The bill extends the direct-payment program, which does exactly what its name implies: send checks to farmers whether they grow anything or not. The size of the check is based on the past size and scale of the farmer's operation, so the biggest and most successful farmers get the biggest government handouts. The fig leaf of reform to which subsidy supporters such as Obama cling is that these payments have been "capped." Yet farm families making up to $2.5 million in adjusted gross income are still eligible for tens of thousands of dollars of payments. John McCain said he would have vetoed the bill for lavishing this kind of welfare on farmers making much more than the average American. In this respect, at least, Republican congressmen should have followed his lead.

■ The villain of the summer blockbuster this year is Rep. Collin Peterson, the Minnesota Democrat who chairs the House Agriculture Committee. With federal ethanol shenanigans driving up the price of corn, movie theaters are feeling the bite as their concession-stand margins are diminished. Making less money from popcorn, cinemas are raising the price of tickets—to $10 in Kansas City, and to $12 in New York. Richard Gil, an economist at the University of Santa Cruz, studies the movie business and predicts that moviegoers will pay an extra buck or two for a ticket by the end of the year. So in addition to driving up our grocery bills to enrich politically connected business interests, doing nothing for energy efficiency, degrading the environment, bleeding the water table dry, and helping to starve the poor of the world, Congress's ethanol program is making summer matinees a little pricier. If this were the plot of a political satire, the critics would call it preposterous.

■ Congress hauled in the oil executives to justify their outrageous habit of maximizing profits rather than setting prices charitably. Never mind that gas prices are high in part because of congressional mandates, regulations, and taxes. What made the hearings especially hypocritical is that many of the congressmen *want* higher gas prices. Most Democrats, as well as John McCain, would fight global warming by cutting carbon emissions. Gas prices would go up. That is, indeed, in large part the point: Higher prices would lead to less gasoline consumption. Evidently a lot of politicians dislike market forces even when they yield the results they favor.

■ Most Americans can agree that veterans should have more education benefits (the existing G.I. Bill provides a significant range of benefits). But Sen. Jim Webb's proposed expansion of the G.I. Bill would provide the full range of benefits after only three years, thus eliminating one of the most valuable incentives to troop retention. Under current law, the full benefits vest only after six years, which means that soldiers who have served three years and are facing a second deployment—the most valuable soldiers in the military—have an incentive to stay through that deployment in order to get their college tuition fully covered, in most cases. The Webb-Hagel bill would eliminate this incentive, which is one reason defense secretary Robert Gates opposes it. Lawmakers wishing to expand the G.I. Bill have a much better alternative. Sens. John McCain, Richard Burr, and Lindsey Graham have put forward a bill that would increase education benefits without having a negative impact on retention. Unfortunately, the Democrats are prepared to eschew good public policy for a chance to maneuver Republicans into a difficult political endgame, using our troops as pawns.

■ The Interior Department decided, mostly on the basis of speculation, that global warming is threatening the polar bear. Normally such a ruling would lead to regulations to end the threat, but Bush's appointees at the department decided that it could hardly impose a comprehensive global-warming policy by regulatory fiat. That sensible conclusion does not, however,

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"I came back brave."

That's what recent University of San Francisco graduate Elizabeth Moyer said about her 2005 internship experience with the Clare Boothe Luce Policy Institute.

Elizabeth came back to school with more courage, "not just in one way, but in a thousand different ways when I decided to speak out instead of staying quiet."

Elizabeth is now the Campaign Manager for an important California State Senate race.

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The Week...

sit well with the law. Expect a flood of lawsuits to impose liberal policies without a congressional vote. Now it's the economy and self-governance that are under threat.

■ In a refreshingly lopsided 7–2 ruling, the Supreme Court has upheld a federal law against child pornography. One might have thought common ground could be found on banning this narrow and revolting traffic, but it has proven difficult. In 2002 the Supreme Court invalidated such a law as too broad. The following year, Congress prohibited images of actual children engaging in sex acts, and of children (actual, virtual, or adults posing as children) engaging in obscene conduct, in interstate and foreign commerce, including on the Internet. An appeals court found even these carefully targeted proscriptions too sweeping, since they supposedly could apply to genuine art. In reversing that decision, Justice Scalia explained that devising some clever *Romeo and Juliet*–type example of a potential chilling effect is not enough; the law cannot be overturned based on speculation. The government can be expected to apply it exclusively against real offenders; if an overzealous prosecutor stretches the law, it can be challenged "as applied." We're relieved that the justices vindicated democratic choice, putting off what Scalia aptly called "fanciful hypotheticals" until they arise in real-world cases.

SAUL LOEB/AFP/GETTY

■ On May 13, Elaine Chao became the longest-serving labor secretary since the Second World War. Since starting her job in 2001—she is the only member of Bush's original cabinet who has stayed put—she has championed both smaller and better government. Her discretionary budget has shrunk from $11.7 billion to $11.6 billion and her current request is for just $10.5 billion. She has helped defeat a series of bad ideas emanating from liberals in Congress, including burdensome ergonomics rules and the number-one item on Big Labor's legislative wish list: card check, a.k.a. the Employee Free Choice Act, an Orwellianly named bill that would deny workers a secret ballot when unions are trying to organize them. Chao's most significant achievement may be that labor bosses now must comply with modern standards of transparency and provide a far more detailed accounting of their money and activities. It is too bad that Chao can't stay on the job longer.

■ One big step forward, two small steps back for school choice. In Georgia, Republican governor Sonny Perdue signed legislation to give people tax credits for donating to scholarship funds that can be used at private or parochial schools. In Arizona, however, a court ruled that a voucher program for disabled and foster children impermissibly aids private schools. That state is also being sued for its own tax-credit-for-donations program, and the Ninth Circuit may strike it down. The good news, however, is that the Supreme Court will probably continue its habit of reversing the Ninth Circuit. If Arizona restructures its voucher program as an additional tax credit, it should be in the clear. School choice may turn out to be an idea that is too good for liberals to kill, although not for lack of trying.

■ A Texas appeals court ruled that the state's child-protective-services agency failed to show that the children of schismatic Mormon polygamists seized in a massive April raid were in "immediate" or "urgent" danger to "physical health or safety." The 16-year-old girl whose hotline call triggered the raid—she said she already had one child, and was pregnant with another—has not been identified; the call may have been a hoax. Although the agency has asked the state supreme court to reverse the decision, the raid looks more and more like a hair-trigger mistake; the child-protection bureaucrats should have gone to court first, since they have ended up there anyway. The mistake is all the more serious because polygamy is illegal for good reason, and the uproar over 19th-century sectaries will only help gay, polyamorist, and (watch for it) Muslim enemies of traditional marriage.

■ When Gen. David Petraeus testified before Congress in April about Iraq, Democrats hammered what then seemed a botched Iraqi-government offensive against Shiite militias in Basra. They don't talk about Basra anymore. Iraqi security forces got their footing in the southern city and secured it—much to the relief of residents sick of the reign of gangs and religious extremists—and have since taken the Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City in Baghdad as well. Both operations are blows to Iranian cat's-paw Moqtada al-Sadr, whose Mahdi Army aspires to be the Hezbollah of Iraq. Overall, the Iraqi security picture is brighter than even optimists about the surge could have hoped back at the end of 2006. General Petraeus noted in mid-May that weekly security incidents were at their lowest level in four years. The Iraq War has changed. When will Democrats acknowledge it?

■ Hezbollah may have overplayed its hand by provoking a confrontation with Israel in 2006, but since then it has been running rings around the United States and the United Nations, acting as Iran's proxy army in Lebanon. It is one of the principal aggressors in the Shiite–Sunni conflict that contorts the Muslim world from Baghdad to Bangladesh, and has masterfully positioned itself to dominate the government of Lebanon's prime minister, Fouad Siniora. Hezbollah's campaign of murder brought the Lebanese to the negotiating table in Doha, and the deal left Hezbollah with enough seats in the cabinet to ensure that it will retain its arms and its capacity to initiate wars. In effect, Hezbollah has power but not responsibility, the dream position of a militia with no legal standing. In this bind, without the monopoly of state power, the Siniora government is unlikely to last much longer, and Lebanon may well fall with it. Then the ayatollahs in Tehran will garner yet another Shiite colony, one that would give them access to the Mediterranean. The Doha agreement looks like today's version of the 1938 Munich agreement: A democracy

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The Week...

bites the dust, and the onlookers either pretend not to notice or cry "peace in our time."

■ After the Burmese cyclone, the Sichuanese earthquake: The heart groans with sympathy. But consider the political fallout. Unlike the odious Burmese generals, Beijing mobilized itself to help its victims; premier Wen Jiabao went to the disaster site himself. As a silver lining for the regime, the world's attention was pulled away from Tibet. But the long-run consequences for even new-model Communism may be profound. The collapse of shoddy concrete buildings shows that China, for all its superpower status, is still a Third World country, whose modernization is retrofitted and regional; the willingness of rescuers, most of them military, cannot disguise their lack of expertise in up-to-date salvage techniques. The earthquake, which provoked the world's sympathy, may provoke doubts and questions among people whose society prepared them poorly for catastrophe.

■ A safe Labour seat in the north of England has been captured in a by-election by the Conservatives in spectacular fashion. The swing to the Right was about 18 percent, and if this were repeated in a general election, the Conservatives under David Cameron would have approximately 400 seats in Parliament, the Labour party only about 100. The electorate appears to have taken a look at prime minister Gordon Brown and disliked what it saw. He has gone back on his word too often, reversed his own decisions, and generally seemed unable to communicate—as though wrapped up in a world of his own. The collapse of trust, and consequent unpopularity, is fast acquiring unstoppable momentum. In panic, the Labour party is searching in its wings for an alternative leader. Throughout his political career, Gordon Brown never hid his belief that he ought to be prime minister, and he made life very difficult for his colleague and rival Tony Blair. In power at last, Brown is instead proving that his ambition outran his capability.

■ It is not every day we agree with an *International Herald Tribune* editorial, but we must hail one the paper had about Frank-Walter Steinmeier. He is Germany's vice chancellor and foreign minister, a Social Democrat. The chancellor, Angela Merkel, is a Christian Democrat. Last fall, Merkel took the extraordinary step of meeting with the Dalai Lama—despite the fact that Germany is China's biggest European trading partner. Beijing was furious. And so, apparently, was Herr Steinmeier: He accused the chancellor of trying to "showcase" human rights. And such showcasing is terribly déclassé. Just recently, the Dalai Lama was again in Germany. Merkel was out of the

Entrepreneurial Exceptionalism

If they had held entrepreneurial Olympics in the 20th century, then the United States would have walked away with most of the gold medals.

But why have American entrepreneurs been better? Is there something about the American spirit that produces effective risk-takers? Do our institutions stimulate entrepreneurship better, or were we just lucky?

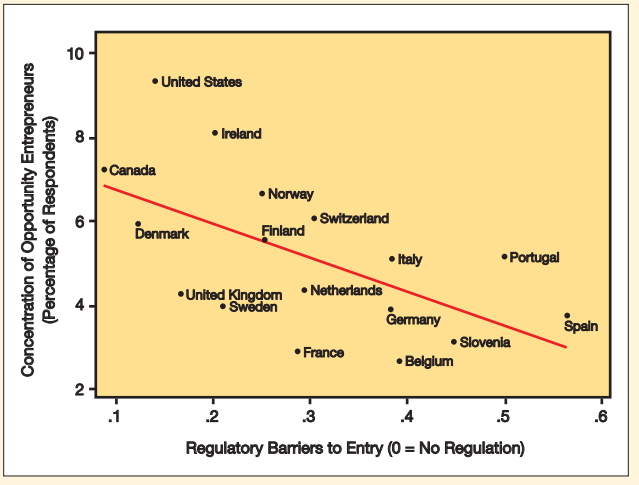
To answer the question, economists Silvia Ardagna and Annamaria Lusardi examined survey data collected from around 150,000 individuals in 37 different countries. Ardagna and Lusardi found that respondents identified themselves as entrepreneurs for two reasons. "Opportunity entrepreneurs" started a business because they planned to create a profitable one. "Remedial entrepreneurs" started a business because they lost their jobs or otherwise had no better option.

The first type of entrepreneur is likely the engine of growth in a dynamic economy. A lousy economy could bring forth many new "entrepreneurs" of the second type, as the jobless try to make ends meet by hawking baubles in the town square.

The key result of the paper for our purposes is visible in the attached chart. The vertical axis shows the concentration of opportunity entrepreneurs in high-income countries in North America and Europe. More than 9 percent of Americans are "opportunity entrepreneurs," which ranks us first among these high-income nations. The horizontal axis is a composite index of regulatory barriers to entry: The higher the rating, the more difficult it is to start a business. Among these countries, Spain is the most difficult to start a business in.

The chart demonstrates a strong relationship between entrepreneurship and regulation. This suggests that U.S. economic success is largely attributable to a relatively favorable regulatory climate. Entrepreneurs have succeeded in the U.S. because government has historically stayed out of the way.

—Kevin A. Hassett



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TREASURE IN TEXAS

SECRET HOARD OF 110-YEAR-OLD SILVER STUNS COIN EXPERTS!

Larger than actual size of 30.6 mm

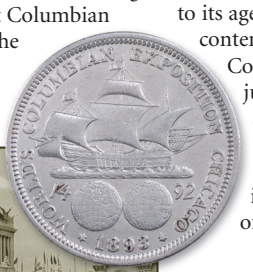
AUSTIN, Texas, Tuesday 8:55 AM — For years stories have circulated about a huge cache of U.S. silver half dollars that had been accumulated and stashed away in an unknown location by an old-time collector. But it was not until our firm was summoned to a tiny farm outside Austin, Texas that hearsay suddenly became startling fact.

There, spread before us on a dining room table, was a small mountain of silver half dollars. But as we began to inspect each coin, one by one, our surprise turned to shock. For these were not just any old silver coins, but rather the very first United States commemoratives, the legendary 1893 Columbian Exposition Half Dollars — over a thousand of them! What's more, each and every coin was preserved in Very Fine condition. The old-timer knew his stuff, and had kept only the better coins in collectible grade.

FIRST EVER, LAST EVER?

This is the first hoard of authentic original 1893 Columbian silver halves we've ever seen of this magnitude, and perhaps the last as well. The United States ceased issuing 90% silver coins 40 years ago. Since then, millions upon millions have vanished forever into the melting pot. It is doubtful we will ever chance upon a hoard of this size and quality again. Due to our private purchase of this major find, this may be your last opportunity to acquire this historically important and valuable collectors coin through a public offering such as this. The Columbian Half Dollar was issued to celebrate the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It was one of the great world's fairs of the 19th century. Situated on almost 700 acres bordering Lake Michigan, the Expo grounds held 150 buildings with exhibits from all the nations of North and South America. At the fair one could ride the world's first Ferris Wheel, or take in such sights as a 22,000 pound brick of Canadian cheese or a 30,000 pound temple crafted entirely of chocolate!

Thousands of visitors attended the fair during 1892-93. The official U.S. Mint Columbian Silver Half Dollar was sold at the fair for the premium price of one dollar — equal to about a full day's wages back then.



THE COLUMBIAN EXPOSITION HALF-DOLLAR

Designers: Charles Barber (obverse) and George Morgan (reverse)
Diameter: 30.6 mm
Weight: 12.5 grams
Composition: .900 fine silver
Status: Legal-Tender Commemorative
Date: 1893

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Relatively few Silver Columbian Half Dollars survived the last century, and fewer yet in Very Fine condition. These coins retain their full designs in bold relief with complete dates. Columbus' ship the Santa Maria sails across the reverse side of the coin, with the two hemispheres representing the world beneath it. This is your chance to acquire a family heirloom that will be the cornerstone of any collection. The Columbian Exposition Silver Half Dollar will always be sought-after by collectors for its historic importance as our nation's FIRST commemorative coin. Act today to become one of the few who has the chance to own a coin from this major find before they are gone forever. Get one for yourself, your friends and loved ones. It will make a gift of lasting value that they will treasure for a lifetime.

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The Week...

country, and Steinmeier refused to meet with him, quipping, "It takes a lot of courage not to meet with the Dalai Lama these days." Then may cowardice spread.

■ The surrender of Nelly Avila Moreno, a top commander in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by its Spanish acronym FARC), is yet another milestone in Colombian president Alvaro Uribe's remarkable campaign against the leftist guerrilla group. Uribe is succeeding in his efforts to stabilize Colombia, even though Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chávez has been supporting FARC's narcoterrorism. (Documents found on captured FARC computers proved the connection.) The best way for the U.S. to punish Chávez for this latest outrage is by supporting his regional nemesis, Uribe, and the best way to do that right now is to pass the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. In stalling the agreement, congressional Democrats have shown an astonishing degree of political cowardice. Almost all of Colombia's exports already enter the U.S. duty-free. The FTA is nothing more than a formalization of that arrangement; a market-opening opportunity for U.S. businesses; and a show of support for a stalwart ally. The agreement's treatment is proof that today's Democratic party is more deeply in hock to its labor-union supporters than at any time in the last two decades.

■ Changes are afoot in Saudi Arabia, and they are changes for the good. Consider this: The desert kingdom had its first-ever public performance of classical music. And here is something else astonishing: It took place before a mixed-gender audience. As the Associated Press reported, "The concert, held at a government-run cultural center, broke many taboos in a country where public music is banned and the sexes are segregated even in lines at fast food outlets." This is all easy to laugh at: the first concert, and a taboo-breaking mixing of genders, in 2008! Ha, ha, ha. But 2008 is better than 2009.

■ You'd better not shout, you'd better not cry, and you'd certainly better not engage in "profiling" or "hate speech": The U.N. Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance is coming to town. To be exact, he is coming—at the invitation of the U.S. government, we are perplexed to learn—to Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Omaha, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Miami, and Puerto Rico's San Juan, to "gather first-hand information" on racism in our country. Following his 18-day tour of inspection, Mr. Doudou Diène, a lawyer from Senegal, will report his findings to the U.N. Human Rights Council. Will his trip to Chicago include a stop at Trinity United Church of Christ to hear a sermon on how "white folks' greed runs a world in need," we wonder? And why does his itinerary not include Honolulu, where Senator Akaka's Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act will privilege citizens of the Hawaiian race? Perhaps these questions might be addressed to whichever U.S. government official was so flabbergastingly stupid as to allow this busybody to come here and mind our business.

■ What has just happened to Lenny Woodward is a symptom of something gone wrong in the England where he lives. A man of 96, he uses a walking stick, he's almost blind, and he lives alone because his wife died three years ago. During the Second World War, he served five years as a gunner with the Desert Rats in North Africa and Italy. For 50 years or so he worked for the railways, and during all that time he has lived in the same house in Norwich, a historic city with more than 30 churches. But the Norwich city council has decreed that trash must be separated into various categories and placed accordingly into one of three bins of different colors, the better to facilitate recycling. This almost-blind veteran put a ketchup bottle and a coffee jar into the wrong-colored bin. (As he explained, "I don't know which bin is which.") The council then punished Mr. Woodward, refusing to collect his trash and warning him that rules had to be obeyed, or else. Greens can take heart: They may not have defeated the Nazis, but they have defeated Lenny Woodward.

■ Lt. Gen. Franklin "Buster" Hagenbeck, superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy, has decided to gender-neutralize the lyrics of West Point's two most hallowed songs, the alma mater ("Guide us, thy sons, aright") and "The Corps" ("We sons of today, we salute you," etc.). The decision follows a similar one by the Naval Academy in 2004; the Air Force Academy retains—for now, at least—its testosterone-dripping alma mater ("Brother men who fly . . . a toast to the host of men we boast"). It's strange that the service academies—which, at around 15 percent, have just about the lowest female enrollment of any American colleges—should be so reluctant to offend, when such bastions of sensitivity as Brown ("From youth we have journeyed to manhood's high station") and Pennsylvania ("Come all ye loyal classmen now") remain blithely troglodytic. Or consider Canada's national anthem, which is not only sexist ("In all thy sons command") but nativist ("our home and native land") and religious ("God keep our land"). Something is surely wrong with the world when the U.S. Army is more politically correct than Canada and the Ivy League.

■ The award for Best Actor at the Cannes Film Festival has gone to Benicio del Toro for his portrayal of the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary Che Guevara in Steven Soderbergh's worshipful four-and-a-half-hour biopic of the charismatic thug. Mr. del Toro declared on accepting the award: "I'd like to dedicate this to the man himself, Che Guevara. . . . I wouldn't be here without Che Guevara, and through all the awards the movie gets you'll have to pay your respects to the man." Let's hope that some moviegoers will instead pay their respects to all the people who *would* be here if they had not been murdered by the "revolutionary tribunals" Guevara zealously supervised, and also to those who drowned or were shot while attempting to escape the oppressive hell-hole that Cuba became under the regime of Castro, Guevara, and their fellow thugs. A very good way to pay respect to these latter would be to shun Steven Soderbergh's shameful movie.

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—Maggie R.

Results not typical.

Lack Of Sleep Impacts 1 In 6 Adults

The National Sleep Foundation's Sleep in America polls reveal that over a six year period only about half of adults get a good night's sleep every night. Sleep deficit is frequently related to too much caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. It is also related to stress, long hours at work, night shifts and working on home computers before going to sleep.

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"I had problems sleeping for several years but never wanted to take prescription meds because of possible side effects. I have taken RestAid™ every night for over two weeks, and I've never slept better. I fall asleep within a half hour of taking it, and I stay asleep longer. " —Scott M.

Results not typical.

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The Week...

■ In the mid-1980s, something peculiar happened: The U.S. acquired a "poet laureate." To many of us, this seemed terribly un-American and un-republican—official poets are something that monarchies and dictatorships have. And now the National Endowment for the Arts has bestowed its first Opera Honors. (Why does the NEA still exist, by the way? Didn't Republicans control Congress for twelve years?) The NEA's chairman, Dana Gioia, said that "the time has come for the U.S. government to honor our great living artists with the high C of official praise." *Official praise*. What would the government know about opera? Art is its own aristocracy, and it has its own ideals, judgments, and standards. Georg Solti, the late conductor, said the best praise he had ever received in his life came from Arturo Toscanini—who said to him just one simple word: *Bene* (good). Since practically nothing that comes from the government is ever reversed (see NEA), the Opera Honors are probably, sadly, here to stay.

■ The Houston Rodeo is the biggest in the world. A 20-day event held each year, the show features bull riding, pig racing, a calf scramble, concerts, a parade, and the World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest. With that much harmless fun on offer, it was inevitable that the rodeo would attract the attention of "diversity" bluenoses. Here they come, a collection of Hispanic lobbying outfits headed by LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens), complaining that the rodeo is insufficiently "inclusive," and that its extensive college-scholarship program is open only to U.S. citizens. So far the rodeo has taken a firm stand against these killjoys. "We've heard their issues. We think they are all pointless," declares Leroy Shafer, the rodeo's chief operating officer. Even more boldly, the rodeo has rejected Justice Department mediation in the dispute. Possibly the rodeo will be beaten down with time. Keeping your seat on a bucking steer is child's play compared with holding the line against the "diversity" enforcers.

■ Rejoice, ladies and gentlemen: There is a new magazine in Britain called *Standpoint*. Its purpose is to "defend and celebrate Western civilization." Its editor is Daniel Johnson, and its deputy editor Jonathan Foreman—two of the finest workers in the trade. On the editorial board are luminaries such as V. S. Naipaul, Tom Stoppard, Noel Malcolm, Gertrude Himmelfarb, and Michael Gove. The board also includes the artist David Hockney and the singer Ian Bostridge. *Standpoint* promises to recall the old *Encounter*, which was itself a splendid contribution to Western civilization. We say again: Rejoice. And subscribe!

■ Hamilton Jordan, Jimmy Carter's campaign director and White House chief of staff, was a political animal as sharp as he was indefatigable. He saw that the path to victory for post-McGovern Democrats involved reaching out to the center-Right (those who "cling" to guns and God, as another Democrat put it). How one governed after one won was another question: Carter's incompetence relegated him to the one-term club. Jordan had the stigmata of the good ol' boy, dressing down, partying hard, and sometimes behaving like a lout. But he also had the courage and good humor of his type, battling half a dozen kinds of cancer for over two decades with high spirits and an evangelical zeal to help fellow sufferers. Dead at 63. R.I.P.

2008

Dismaying Distractions

John McCain has been a lucky man in the campaign so far. First Rudolph Giuliani began to fade. Then Mike Huckabee wounded McCain's chief primary opponent, Mitt Romney. McCain was able to secure the Republican nomination while the Democratic primary dragged bitterly on. Luck is an indispensable asset for a candidate. Lately, however, we have begun to wonder if the McCain campaign means to make it its principal strategy.

McCain's well-wishers should be troubled by three recent events and one non-event. First, the candidate threw a preacher, John Hagee, overboard. The pastor had been criticized during the primaries for, among other things, his anti-Catholicism. Liberals later took up the refrain. McCain repudiated Hagee only after learning that he had said that the Holocaust was part of a divine plan to establish the state of Israel. A competent campaign would not have let this controversy continue for months.

McCain should have used the time afforded by the continuing Democratic primary to upgrade his organization and hone his message.

Second, Cindy McCain tried to resist releasing her tax returns. She had to relent eventually. Was nobody in the campaign able to get the candidate and his wife to foresee that outcome?

Third, the campaign got bogged down in a damaging debate about the lobbyists working for it. It established a policy of not paying anyone currently doing lobbying work. It is a ridiculous solution to a non-problem. If we were worried that interest groups were the puppet-masters behind the McCain campaign, we would worry more knowing that its staffers were being paid exclusively by those interest groups. McCain should be making the case against Obama, who has recently said that Americans should consume less energy to make the world like us more. Instead he is wasting time in an effort that seems designed chiefly to appeal to his own sense of being the holiest man in politics.

McCain should have used the time afforded by the continuing Democratic primary to upgrade his organization and hone his message. His fundraising, at least, has picked up. But his missteps suggest that his campaign remains a haphazard affair. And he has not used these past months to unveil a compelling platform of domestic reform. That failure is the most troubling non-development in his campaign. If he does not right his ship, soon, luck will not suffice to get him to his destination.

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2008 II

All Talk

EIGHT years in the Illinois legislature and four years in the hot-air shop of the Senate may prepare you to be a world leader, if it is your bent and you work to educate yourself. If you spend the time majoring in oratory, you will do your learning in public, and the gaps will show, as Barack Obama is discovering.

When President Bush addressed the Knesset in celebration of Israel's 60th birthday, he criticized those who would "negotiate with the terrorists and radicals, as if some ingenious argument will persuade them they have been wrong all along." Bush called this "foolish delusion" the "false comfort of appeasement." He did not say whom he had in mind—rightly so, since politics traditionally stops at the water's edge. Barack Obama thought Bush was targeting him (if the shoe fits . . .) and cried foul on a "false political attack." Other Democrats chimed in, in support ("reckless and irresponsible"—Harry Reid; "offensive and outrageous"—Hillary Clinton).

Obama felt vulnerable because he has indeed been saying that he would talk with anti-American dictators, not all of them Middle Eastern (Hugo Chávez, Kim Jong Il, Raúl Castro), whom Bush has shunned. In the fight over the Knesset speech, he repeated his willingness. "Strong countries and strong presidents talk to their adversaries. That's what Reagan did with Gorbachev. I mean, think about it. Iran, Cuba, [and] Venezuela . . . don't pose a serious threat to us the way the Soviet Union [did]. And yet we were willing to talk to the Soviet Union." In other ripostes, Obama also cited Kennedy and Nixon.

John McCain was happy to jump on Obama's "inexperience and reckless judgment." Of course the Iranians have no nuclear arsenal (yet). But they kill Americans in Iraq and menace the peace of their region through terrorist surrogates. Obama ventured a small backtrack, agreeing that Iran is "a grave threat."

Good to have that nailed down; perhaps there will be more progress in Obama's second semester. But the deeper problem is Obama's simplistic view of how negotiation works. Ronald Reagan indeed met with Mikhail Gorbachev—after five years of Cold War hardball. The talks, when they came, had many fits and starts, for when it came right down to it Reagan was not willing to barter away SDI. Richard Nixon's opening to China was another such exploit, preceded by months of preliminaries, both private and public. (N.B.: Even so, NATIONAL REVIEW opposed both negotiations at the time.) John Kennedy fits the Obama model—disastrously. His face-off with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna, five months after his inauguration, persuaded the Communist that the young former senator was all talk, a weak tyro. The Cuban missile crisis was the fruit of that profile in recklessness.

Diplomacy is in part the art of dealing with enemies. It is wrong to make a fetish of the immorality of the other side, or the purity of silence. But it is equally wrong, and generally more dangerous, to talk for the sake of hope and change.

THE LAW

Marital Strife

THE California supreme court threw out the state's marriage laws as discriminatory. The state provides domestic-partner benefits for same-sex couples, and treats domestic partners as married in all but name. To withhold the name, the court ruled, is discriminatory and irrational. It thus declared the California electorate of 2000, 61 percent of which voted to keep marriage as it was, to be bigoted. Also condemned, by implication, was Barack Obama, a liberal opponent of same-sex marriage.

As it happens, the court had half a point, although it was not its place to make it. The state has an interest in recognizing all manner of contractual relationships. The parties to such contracts may be business partners, roommates, relatives, friends, or lovers. The only sexual relationship in which the state has a positive interest, however, is a union between a man and a woman that aims for permanence. Only that union naturally results in children and is ideal for their upbringing. To recognize non-marital sexual relationships serves no worthwhile purpose, and is in that sense irrational.

We would say that California's policy has been muddled rather than bigoted. It was not for a court to try to impose rationality on that policy, let alone to do so by imposing same-sex marriage rather than by eliminating domestic partnerships.

Liberal commentary on the court's decision has largely taken the form of half-truisms. So, for example, we are told that the court was justified in overriding the people of California because "rights cannot be put up to a vote." It is true that we have a moral claim to our rights no matter what anyone else says. But it is not true that those rights include the right to marry a partner of the same sex. And even our real rights depend for their legal force on collective decisions to recognize them. Our right to free speech is protected because the people voted to ratify a constitutional amendment to that effect. The California court has merely substituted a vote of seven judges for a vote of the people or their representatives.

We are told, as well, that the courts are supposed to be countermajoritarian institutions that protect the rights of minorities, and that the judges were therefore just doing their job. In the normal course of events, actually, the courts' job is to apply the majority's will as set down in law. When a court must choose between the majority's temporary will, expressed in a statute, and its permanent will, expressed in a constitution, then by all means it should set aside the former. But it is far-fetched to suppose that Californians, in adopting their constitution, were adopting same-sex marriage too. And where the court has no legal warrant for granting a minority its desires, it may not legitimately do so.

Californians should rectify their judges' mistake by placing marriage policy beyond those judges' reach. They should enact a constitutional amendment to keep their marriage law. Voters there and elsewhere, meanwhile, should ponder the contrast between a presidential candidate, Obama, who says that he "respects" the court's decision and has indicated that he wants judges who see their job as empathizing from the bench, and another candidate, McCain, who says he wants judges to follow the law and leave marriage policy to the people.

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■ PEOPLE ■

Lion in Winter

Why Teddy ran

MICHAEL KNOX BERAN

THE press notices that followed the announcement that Sen. Edward M. Kennedy has been diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor were, quite properly, sympathetic. You don't kick a man on whom the shadow of death has just fallen.

But the instinct of candor rebels against the constraints of hagiography. Such was the delicacy of some of the encomiasts (among them Robert Kaiser of the *Washington Post* and Tim Rutten of the *Los Angeles Times*) that, with the exception of oblique references to "personal tragedy" and a dynasty's "tragic epic," they failed to mention the central event of the senator's public career. *Newsweek*'s Sarah Kliff went so far as to express doubt about what the central event was. "Pinpointing the moment that defines Edward M. Kennedy's 45-year Senate career," she wrote, "is, to say the least, a bit of a challenge."

On the contrary, the defining moment is so obvious that probably only a *Newsweek* reporter could fail to see it. Leave Chappaquiddick out of the reckoning, and the route by which Kennedy mounted to liberaldom's Olympus appears a bizarre deviation from his family's traditions. Tell the story with a reasonable respect for the facts, and his progress becomes not only comprehensible but perhaps inevitable. For the fourth and only surviving son of Joseph P. and Rose Kennedy, the path to liberal lionhood began on Dike Road on the night of July 18–19, 1969.

The salient political consequence of the drowning (or suffocation) of Mary Jo Kopechne in a 1967 Oldsmobile Delmont 88 was never seriously in doubt. When the sun rose over the channel at Poucha Pond the next morning, it was as clear as anything could be that Ted Kennedy would never be president of the United States. The circumstances of the death were too cruel. John Farrar, the diver who recovered the body in the morning, deduced, from the position in which he found it, that there had been a dwindling pocket of air in the car after its submersion. If help had been summoned in time, she might have lived.

It was one of those incidents (to borrow Joseph Conrad's words) that show "in the light of day the inner worth of a man, the edge of his temper, and the fiber of his stuff." In his otherwise self-serving and insincere televised speech on July 25, six days after Mary Jo's death, Kennedy confessed the weakness of mind that had left him unequal to the emergency. "I was overcome, I'm frank to say, by a jumble of emotions: grief, fear, doubt, exhaustion, panic, confusion, and shock." You can't succumb to a mental palsy of this kind and expect to remain what the Romans called *capax imperii*, worthy of the first place.

Ten years after the death of Mary Jo, Kennedy did of course seek the presidency. But his heart was not in it; to his credit, he was not inwardly persuaded by his own excuses. His campaign, lackluster and uninspired, dissolved in an agony of self-doubt. Not until the convention did he manage to give a good speech. By then he was safely out of it, and Carter safely in.

Had Chappaquiddick never happened, Kennedy would have had every incentive to try, as his older brothers did, to arrest the leftward lurch of the Democratic party, which weakened Democrats' ability to compete for the White House. JFK, eager first to obtain the presidency and afterwards to hold it, challenged emerging liberal pieties by taking a hard line in the Cold War, exploiting a phony missile gap for electoral advantage, and proposing tax cuts for the rich. RFK, who cut his teeth in Joe McCarthy's school of anti-Communism, fought corruption in the labor unions and questioned the efficacy of Great Society welfare programs.

Ted, after Chappaquiddick, had to find another path to glory, one that did not include a sojourn at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. His choice revealed a certain native shrewdness: Morally debarred from the presidency, he would be the liberal lion that the older brothers—who valued possession of the White House more than they

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Mr. Beran is the author of *The Last Patrician: Bobby Kennedy and the End of American Aristocracy*.

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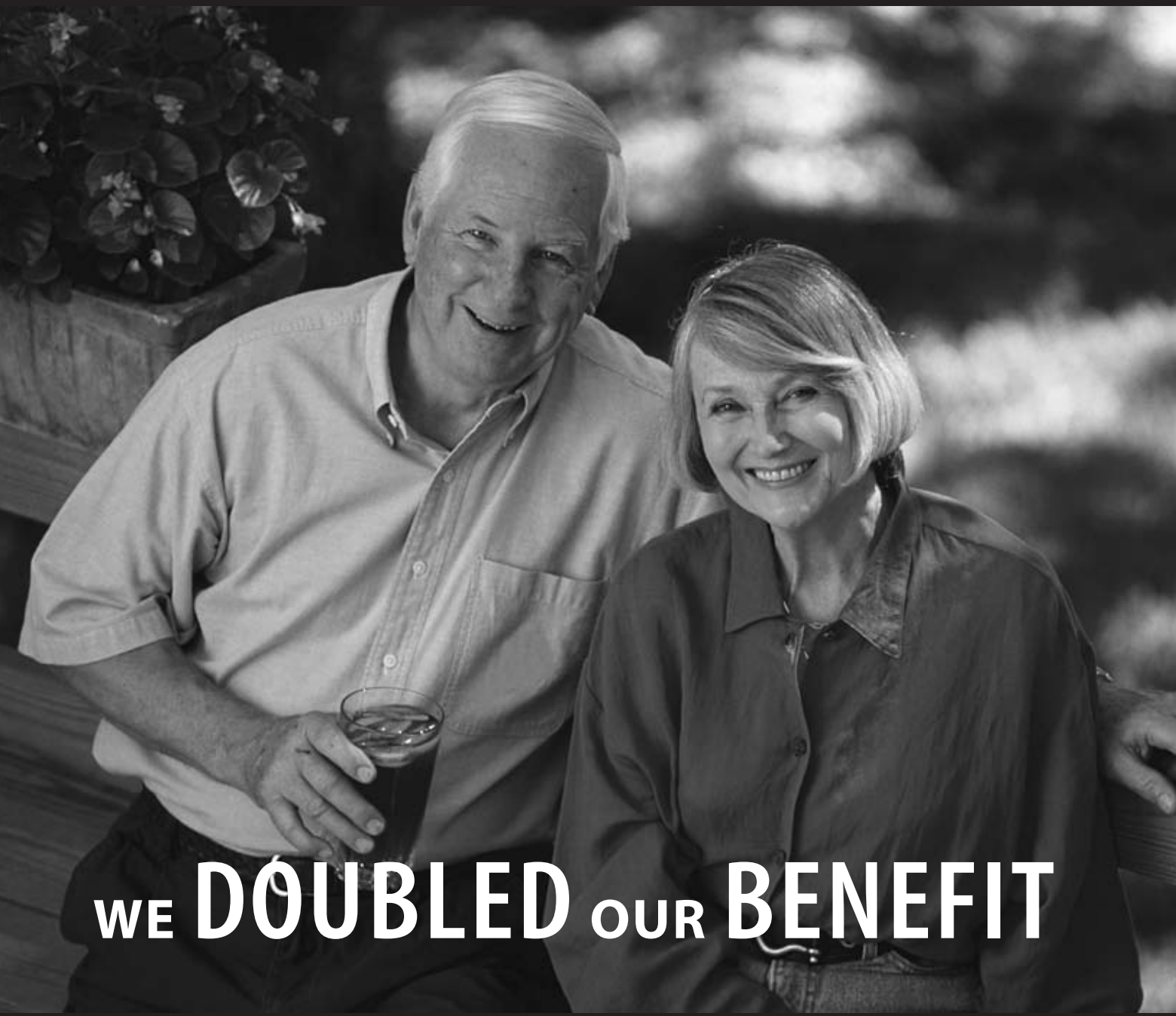

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did the whimsies of the Left—could never be. The older boys were retrospectively endowed with liberal halos, as a concession to their martyrdoms; the kid brother would obtain the same crown in life.

By hewing with so little deviation to the liberal line, Kennedy has been able to maintain his dominance in the party. Only a Democratic president can challenge that dominance. Ted's fidelity to old-school liberalism has made it difficult for Democratic presidents to emerge. He is not, of course, the only reason for the party's leftward drift. But he has played a part in exacting pounds of flesh from prospective presidential candidates in the name of the liberal "dream" of which he is one of the party's principal custodians. In the Democratic lexicon, "pivot" means the effort of the party's nominee to extricate himself from the bargains he made during the primaries to win over hard-line liberals like Kennedy. The result: Only three times since Chappaquiddick has a Democrat won the White House.

With the exception of the anomalous Carter, no Democrat succeeded in negotiating the gauntlet Kennedy helped set up until the Nineties, when Bill Clinton rose to power. Clinton won the White House, but he failed to re-orient the party; its soul continued to belong to the senior senator from Massachusetts. Kennedy, though he was not the head of the party, prided himself on being its "conscience." He worked assiduously to undermine reformist efforts inspired by the success of moderates like Clinton and Tony Blair. In 1995, John Kerry—anxiously contemplating a presidential run of his own—expressed doubts about raising the minimum wage. "Supporting this will make small business unhappy with us," Kerry said. Kennedy shut him down. "If you're not for raising the minimum wage," he shouted, "you don't deserve to call yourself a Democrat." The Democratic party remains stuck in a McGovernesque time-warp in part because Kennedy likes it that way.

Unsurpassed, by his brothers, in the grosser political arts—glad-handing, back-slapping, horse-trading, tear-shedding—Kennedy is at the same time the dimmest, the least intellectually developed, of the four Kennedy boys. He was, and remains, the baby of the family. In aging he has reverted to type, his bloated old-man's form erasing the handsomeness of his youth and recalling the little fat kid he used to be. Ted was the one who got into trouble—at Harvard (where he was caught cheating on a Spanish exam), at University of Virginia law school (where he was cited for reckless driving), on the Vineyard. If his stolid, unimaginative liberalism was partly inspired by a desire for a legacy and the urge to forestall potential rivals, it is also the faithful reflection of a man who lacks the mental agility that characterized Jack and Bobby.

Yet it would be unfair to portray his politics merely as an expression of guile and vainglory. It is not unlikely that Kennedy conceives his work as tribune of the plebs as a form of penance. It is characteristic of the liberal to regard public service as more ennobling than other kinds of labor—so ennobling, indeed, as to constitute a kind of shrift. Why the exercise of political power should be considered a walk to Canossa is a little mysterious; but judging from the press notices prompted by his cancer diagnosis, many appear to accept Kennedy's legislative contrition at face value. Implicit in their portrayals of Ted as a heroic figure, a *preux chevalier* on Capitol Hill, is the belief that the (unheroic) stain of Chappaquiddick has been effaced. "He has done more for the health care of others than just about anybody in history," Barack Obama said. The *New York Times*, in its panegyric, cited one Kennedy aficionado who compared his hero's efforts to those of the Roman warrior Horatius Cocles. "There'll never be another Ted Kennedy," Paul S. Grogan, president of the Boston Foundation, was quoted as saying. "He's sort of Horatio at the bridge. He's been such an outsized figure, so influential, so effective." The metaphor of the bridge was unfortunate, but there can be little doubt that, in the eyes of the *Times*, Kennedy has atoned for his sins.

In January, at a rally at American University, he anointed Barack Obama the fifth Kennedy brother. It might have been his last act of public penance, the final expiation of the "awful curse" which, he said after Chappaquiddick, seemed to hang over "all the Kennedys." Why Barack? He's black, and thus fulfills the Kennedy religion of civil rights. He also redeems Jack's notorious tardiness in that area. He is, finally, one of the few senators who are (arguably) as undeviatingly of the Left as Ted himself. In inducting Obama into Camelot, the liberal lion found a cub.

How much Kennedy cares for the egalitarian world his laws have made is an open question. Like the other grand seigneurs of our politics—the Roosevelts, the Stevensons, the Rockefellers—Ted is, in his personal culture, distinctly *ancien régime*. When the demands of the new culture threaten his patrician prerogatives, he is quick to show his claws. Wind farms in Nantucket Sound might be good for the environment, but they would spoil the sailing out of Hyannis Port. Kennedy opposed them. His theoretical devotion to the meritocracy led him to make a stink about the favoritism shown to "legacies" in college admissions, but when it comes to who should succeed him in the Senate, he has reportedly said that he would like his second wife, Louisiana native Victoria Reggie Kennedy, to represent the voters of Massachusetts. Nepotism is acceptable when the only thing at stake is a Senate seat.

Something more than hypocrisy is at work. Chappaquiddick has left its mark. In pursuing so single-mindedly a politics of absolution, in working so feverishly to pass laws that help the little people (to atone for his own failure to help Mary Jo), Kennedy has lost sight of the consequences of his effort. Only when his policies happen to inconvenience *him* does he understand that lawmaking is not simply a form of private therapy.

Which is not to say that his knee-jerk liberalism is insincere—only that he adheres to it uncritically and unreflectively, in the way the reformed drunkard holds to his 12 Steps. Examine the books, speeches, and position papers of Jack and Bobby, and you find a thoughtfulness, a capacity for constructive argument, that is missing from Ted's state papers. There is evidence that the older brothers even wrestled with the rights and wrongs of public questions. Teddy, by contrast, is not interested in justifying rationally a politics he embraced less from reflection or ideological conviction than from the realization that it offered a convenient path to rehabilitation. Ideology requires intellectual exertion; therapy does not.

As he prepares to leave the stage, Senator Kennedy will be remembered, not only as a lion of the progressive cause, but also as one of the age's foremost practitioners of the politics of aristocratic self-absorption. **NR**

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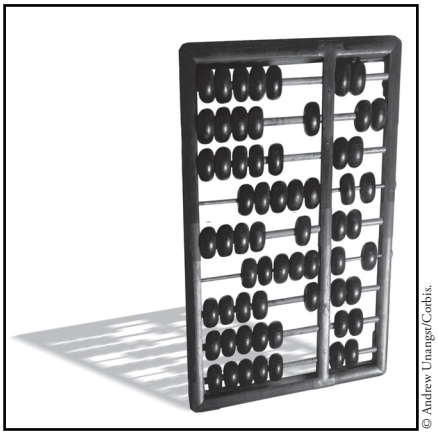

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The abacus is a calculating tool used by many cultures.

About Your Professor

David M. Bressoud is the DeWitt Wallace Professor of Mathematics in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Macalester College, where he has also served as Chair of the department. He earned his Master's and Ph.D. in Mathematics from Temple University.

A former Fulbright Fellow and Sloan Foundation Fellow, Professor Bressoud has served as Visiting Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study and the Mathematical Association of America's Pólya Lecturer, and has received the Mathematical Association of America's Allegheny Mountain Section Distinguished Teaching Award.

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■ 2008

Two of A Kind

On the friendship—and political alliance—of Lindsey Graham and John McCain

JOHN J. MILLER

On July 4 last year, Sens. John McCain and Lindsey Graham attended a reenlistment ceremony in Baghdad. Nearly 600 American troops volunteered to keep on fighting, in what Gen. David Petraeus described as possibly the largest reenlistment event in the history of the U.S. military. The next day, on a jet from Kuwait to Paris, the Republicans reflected on what they had just seen. "They think they can win," said McCain, according to Graham. "If they're willing to soldier on in a war zone, we can soldier on in this campaign."

At the time, McCain's presidential prospects hardly could have looked worse. It was the very opposite of a surge: He was running out of money. He was flopping in the polls. "He was fifth in a four-person race," says Graham. Yet the South Carolinian remained hopeful. "On the flight, I went down the list of candidates and explained to John why we're better positioned than each one of them." McCain began to buck up, in part because of Graham's optimism but mostly because of the troops they had visited. "That trip was a defining moment for the campaign," says Graham.

It's no surprise that Graham was a witness. He's by McCain's side almost constantly, whether trekking to faraway places such as Iraq and Uzbekistan or vetting vice-presidential candidates over Memorial Day weekend. "I can't think of two Republican senators who are better friends than John and Lindsey," says Sen. Jon Kyl, an Arizona Republican. "When they're together, it's a nonstop riot. McCain tells stories, Graham cuts in with quips, and everyone's in stitches." For stump speeches, they have a routine: Graham introduces Cindy McCain, the candidate's wife, who introduces her husband. Or sometimes the introducers swap places. On a few occasions, McCain has referred to his fellow senator as "Cindy." "We just laugh it off," says Graham.

The 52-year-old Graham is short and charming, and he speaks with a folksy twang. He's a bachelor without children, which is one of the reasons he's able to devote so much time to McCain. Conservatives probably would be happier if McCain's best political pal were South Carolina's other senator, Jim DeMint, whose votes often earn him 100 percent marks from the American Conservative Union. Graham, whose ACU score last year was 88 percent, faces reelection and must overcome a primary challenge from

Candidate and witness

his right. He's likely to survive, but there's a chance he won't serve much longer as a senator anyway: If McCain wins in November, Graham would be a frontrunner for attorney general.

Graham and McCain share a background in the military. During the 1980s, Graham was an Air Force prosecutor. He went on to join the South Carolina Air National Guard (he was called up during the first Gulf War) and then the Air Force Reserves. Two years ago, a federal court ruled that his position in the Senate barred him from serving as a military judge. Technically, however, he remains a colonel and a JAG instructor in the Air Force Reserves. No other senator is a member of the Guard or any reserve service.

Following active duty, Graham worked briefly as a trial lawyer. He took medical-malpractice cases and used some of the proceeds to run for the state legislature. He won a seat in 1992 and entered the U.S. Congress with the historic GOP class of 1994, capturing a district that hadn't voted Republican since the 19th century. More than four years would pass before he came to know McCain.

It happened during the impeachment of Bill Clinton. Graham was on the House Judiciary Committee and took a leading role in the prosecution. At the time, he made a positive impression on David Schippers, the chief investigative counsel for the House Republicans. Graham "had the finest political sense of anyone I met in Congress," wrote Schippers in his memoir. That's a common observation. "Graham doesn't call people to seek their political advice," says one Senate staffer. "He calls people to give them political advice."

During Clinton's trial, Graham met McCain on the Senate floor. "We just said hello a couple of times," he recalls. A few months later, McCain invited Graham to come by his office. McCain was preparing his first presidential run and wanted Graham's help. "He asked for my support and I said yes right away—I think he was kind of stunned at how quickly I agreed," says Graham. "I didn't have anything against George W. Bush. I just liked John's style. We have a similar sense of humor. We hit it off well."

From a political standpoint, they're well matched. In the House, Graham displayed some of McCain's maverick tendencies. In 1998, for instance, he was the only Republican Judiciary Committee member to vote against one of the articles of impeachment. Before that, he played a part in the failed "coup" to oust Newt Gingrich as speaker. Graham was also a supporter of McCain-style campaign-finance reform.

Unfortunately for McCain, their partnership didn't deliver a victory in South Carolina's GOP primary in 2000. "Bush was better organized, and quite frankly he was the better candidate," says Graham. "We learned from it. We learned that institutional support matters. In 2000, we were trying to lead a movement. In 2008, we were ready to lead the party."

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At the center of their friendship lies a common vision, says Graham: "We share a blunt assessment of what our country's greatest challenges are. We believe in a world in which conservatives can reach across the aisle and work for the common good. The major problems of our time should be embraced and solved, not put off to the next election."

The most pressing problem of our time, according to Graham, is entitlements. "We have to reform Social Security," he says. The senator comes to the issue with an unusual amount of personal credibility: When he was a college student, both of his parents died, and he became the legal guardian of his 13-year-old sister, who received survivor benefits. "I know how much Social Security means to people," he says. Graham supports personal accounts, but many conservatives have found him too eager to accept a deal involving tax increases. "We're never going to have a Republican solution to Social Security," he explains, "but we may have a bipartisan one."

On most issues, his views mirror McCain's. The only significant disagreement Graham can identify is over marriage: Graham is for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. There are a handful of other divergences—Graham's record on trade is more protectionist, for instance—but he's essentially a McCain Republican. Graham believes cap-and-trade legislation is a sensible way to address global warming. He thinks imprisoned terrorists should enjoy more legal rights. He's also with his friend on immigration reform, which has inspired restrictionists to invent a new word: Grahamnesty.

The senator's apostasies have prompted Buddy Witherspoon, a GOP activist, to challenge Graham in a June 10 primary. Nobody expects Witherspoon to steal the nomination, because Graham hasn't taken the one step that might truly imperil his career: He remains firmly pro-life. Yet *The American Spectator* recently labeled him "the worst Republican senator."

That's too harsh, especially for a guy who has supported the war in Iraq with determination, and who has sided with small-government conservatives on important votes involving health care and prescription drugs. By the time the general election is in full swing, in fact, Graham may become something of a conservative darling: One of his chief campaign functions hasn't been to advance a positive vision of McCain Republicanism, but rather to attack Democrats.

"Barack Obama does not possess the experience and judgment to be commander in chief in a time of war," he says. "His biggest flaw is that he's not an authentic agent of change. He has no record of going to the Left and saying, 'You're wrong.'" As an example, Graham cites Obama's role in the debate over last year's immigration bill. During its final act, the Democrat introduced an amendment that would have preserved the bill's amnesty provisions (this pleased the Left) while gutting its temporary-worker program (this angered business). "Immigration is tough politics," says Graham. "When Obama found himself crossways with the unions, he folded like a cheap suit." At the time, Obama's move compelled Graham to make an impassioned speech on the floor of the Senate, pumping his fists as he paced back and forth—he was so animated it made the rounds on YouTube.

Obama's proposed amendment had the effect of sabotaging a delicate bipartisan accord on immigration. Yet it was a deal that many conservatives despised, so Graham may be wrong to think that reminding them of it—and, by extension, of McCain's support for it—will serve his friend's cause. Can't he find a different example of Obama's kowtowing to the Left? This highlights what may be Graham's biggest weakness: For all of his considerable political skills, he doesn't have his finger on the pulse of conservatives. In time, he may find it—and this is a prospect that conservatives should welcome rather than reject. Graham can be a talented and useful ally.

In the near term, perhaps it's enough that Graham has his finger on the pulse of his friend. On May 21, a Zogby poll of likely voters gave Obama an eight-point lead over McCain. That gap could widen if and when Hillary Clinton drops out of the race. This summer, McCain may find himself back to where he was a year ago—losing the money race, tumbling in the polls, and listening to pundits who insist he's doomed. Maybe Lindsey Graham can suggest a new trip to Baghdad. **NR**

■ 2008 II

Back at The Altar

Same-sex marriage returns to politics

RAMESH PONNURU

JOHN MCCAIN and Barack Obama both say that they oppose same-sex marriage. Both also say they oppose a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman. Hillary Clinton agrees with them on each point. President Bush once sought an amendment but in 2005 dropped the idea as unattainable. At the top of our politics, then, we seem to have reached a moderate consensus on same-sex marriage. You might therefore think that it will not be an issue in this year's presidential race.

Maybe it won't. But the California supreme court has just done its part to blow up this bipartisan consensus. It ordered the state to begin granting marriage licenses to same-sex couples. There is an outside chance that its decision will make same-sex marriage an even bigger issue in this election than it was in the last one.

In November 2003, the Massachusetts supreme court issued a similar edict. A few months later, President Bush responded by endorsing a constitutional amendment on marriage. That amendment did not get the votes of a majority of senators, let alone the supermajority it would have needed to be sent to the states and ratified. But over the next year, 11 states voted on initiatives to keep marriage between men and women. All of them passed.

There is some controversy about whether those initiatives aided Bush's re-election. They do not appear to have inspired his supporters to vote in greater numbers than they voted in states without such initiatives on the ballot. But this narrow dispute should not obscure the larger truth that the emergence of same-sex marriage as a political issue helped Bush. His opponent, John Kerry, was on the defensive on the issue for most of the campaign.

Supporters of same-sex marriage have

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hoped, and opponents have feared, that as time passes, the public will get used to the innovation and opposition will dissipate. Until the California court ruling, it appeared that marriage would figure in this election only as part of the argument about judicial appointments. (McCain has promised to appoint judges who would interpret rather than make the law. Obama says that he is looking for nominees who have "the empathy to understand what it's like to be poor or African-American or gay or disabled or old.")

Several factors are combining to increase the political impact of the California decision. Previous triumphs for same-sex marriage have occurred in states where it is difficult to amend the constitution. In 1999, Vermont became the first state to recognize same-sex civil unions. Its supreme court ordered the breakthrough, and opponents had no real recourse. Massachusetts's constitution is only slightly easier to amend. California's constitution is, on the other hand, notoriously easy to amend, and an initiative to block same-sex marriage will be on the November ballot. That fact alone will make the issue part of the presidential campaign.

And not just in California. Massachusetts law did not allow out-of-state same-sex couples to marry, but California has no such restriction in its law. Couples from the 48 states without same-sex marriage will be able to go there, get married, and return home. They will then be able to sue their home states in federal court to force them to recognize their marriages. They will argue that the Constitution, by requiring that states give "full faith and credit" to one another's acts, mandates such recognition. In 2004, it was possible to believe that, if Congress stayed out of the way, this issue could be settled state by state. In 2008 that assumption may look a lot less plausible.

Obama's position, that he "respects" the California decision, is starting to appear well to the left of McCain's. McCain has endorsed an amendment to his home state's constitution to block same-sex marriage. After the California decision, he repeated his view that marriage should be reserved for opposite-sex couples and said that the people, not judges, should make the call. Logically, those positions entail support for the California ballot initiative.

Litigation in other states will create an additional contrast between the two candidates. In 1996, Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act precisely to keep states from having to recognize other states' same-sex marriages. McCain voted for the act. Obama recently told *The Advocate*, a gay magazine, that he would like to repeal it. So he both "respects" the California decision and wants to remove other states' legal defense against being forced to follow it.

In fact, Obama's position is to the left of Kerry's. Kerry endorsed an amendment to his own state's constitution prohibiting same-sex marriage. While he voted against

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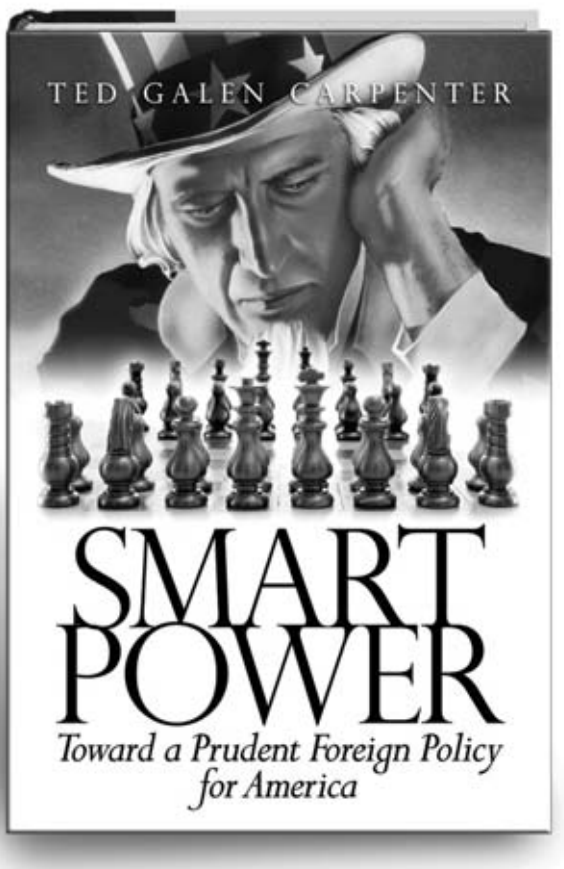

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the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996, by 2004 he was a supporter of it. (Obama is also to the left of Hillary Clinton, who wants to modify rather than repeal the act.)

The much-discussed softening of public opposition to same-sex marriage, meanwhile, is not showing up in the polls. Gallup's figures show that same-sex marriage made rapid progress between 1996 and 2004. At the start of that period the public opposed it by 68 to 27 percent. By the end they opposed it by only 55 to 42 percent. Since same-sex marriage became a political issue, however, attitudes seem to have frozen. The latest Gallup poll has 56 percent of the public opposing same-sex marriage and 40 percent supporting it.

And opponents of same-sex marriage are much more inclined than supporters to base their votes on the issue. A quarter of opponents in the Gallup survey say that they will make the issue a litmus test for candidates. Only 2 percent of supporters say the same thing.

Even in liberal California, most people seem to reject same-sex marriage. In making its decision, the supreme court had to set aside a traditional-marriage statute that had passed by referendum in 2000. A *Los Angeles Times* poll shows that 54 percent of Californians are prepared to vote for the initiative to put traditional marriage in the state constitution.

Some observers are saying that 54 percent is a low number, since initiatives tend to lose support as elections draw near. But there is an element of liberal wishfulness in this assessment. The poll showed that only 35 percent of the public planned to vote against the initiative. The reason initiatives leach support over time is that people tend to be risk-averse about proposed changes, particularly if they do not feel confident that they grasp all of the implications. In this case, most voters are likely to feel that they have a good handle on the basic question, and their bias against change may lead them to vote to stop same-sex marriage.

McCain's opposition to a federal constitutional amendment has always been contingent. He prefers a state-by-state resolution of the issue so long as that remains possible. He has said, however, that if courts seem likely to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act, he might then decide that an amendment is necessary. He will probably be reluctant to reach that conclusion, not least because the media will overlook the qualifications in his past statements and dub him a flip-flopper.

His reluctance to endorse federal action may, however, stand him in good stead in this election. Voters, particularly those who are ambivalent about social issues, tend to take whichever side of a cultural controversy they consider less aggressive. That is why so much of the political debate around social issues concerns which side is the aggressor. (During Samuel Alito's confirmation hearings, for example, Democrats cast him as a threat to the status quo on abortion while Republicans accused the Democrats of attacking someone merely for holding conservative views.)

McCain has gone out of his way to steer a middle course on this issue and avoid offending gays. Social liberals, on the other hand, have been incendiary. It's not just that the California supreme court has upset the status quo and overturned the will of the people. The court's argument, taken seriously, implies that the voters of that state are intolerant bigots for giving gay and lesbian couples all of the privileges of marriage but withholding the word. (Obama is another bigot on this view: His opposition to same-sex marriage, however weak, amounts to a denial of equal citizenship to homosexuals.) On this issue McCain is a moderately conservative Republican standing up to liberal extremism, which is precisely the way he wants to run.

The press is cautioning McCain to tread carefully, noting that California's nominally Republican governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, opposes the ballot initiative. This is more wishfulness. The governor's stated view is that the court has spoken and the people should acquiesce. McCain can champion the people over judges and politicians, whatever their party, without serious risk.

Same-sex marriage may prevail everywhere eventually. The ease of amending California's constitution makes it a double-edged sword: Even if social conservatives succeed in amending California's constitution this November, a future majority of the state could strike the amendment. And Obama will almost certainly win California. A lot of people will vote for him and against same-sex marriage. But McCain's chances of winning the presidency just got better, thanks to a court in San Francisco. **NR**

■ 2008 III

Some Mandate

In the popular vote, the inevitable candidate is hardly that

BYRON YORK

REMEMBER the "mandate" question? Back in 2000, Democrats argued that George W. Bush, who had lost the popular vote but won the Electoral College, did not have a "mandate" to govern. Then, in 2004, after Bush had won it all by a fairly narrow margin, they claimed he still didn't have a clear mandate to run things without extensive input from the opposition party.

Republicans dismissed this as sour grapes—a win is a win—but Democrats took the issue quite seriously. Now they face a question of their own: Does Barack Obama have a mandate? What happens if the senator from Illinois amasses enough delegates to win his party's nomination but loses the popular vote?

This isn't the way things were supposed to turn out. At the end of February, after a string of eleven straight wins, Obama led Clinton by a healthy margin in the popular vote. Clinton appeared to be going down fast. But then she mounted a strong comeback, with victories in Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky. The popular-vote gap narrowed so greatly that Clinton threatened to move into the lead. Indeed, if one counts Clinton's 295,000-vote victory in Florida, she is within striking distance of Obama—and that's leaving out the votes she won in Michigan, where Obama's name wasn't on the ballot. But even if she doesn't fully catch up, the two will be virtually tied. Given the controversies over Florida and Michigan, plus questions about a few caucus states in which there were no official vote totals, the matter of who won the popular vote could remain unresolved.

That's the kind of situation that creates hard feelings for the losing candidate's supporters—just remember all those

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"Re-Defeat Bush" stickers you saw in 2004. But for Democrats today, the numbers point to a fundamental problem with the party's nominating system: the practice of awarding delegates proportionally, rather than under a winner-take-all system of the sort used by Republicans.

Proportional allocation has produced some results that are downright perverse. In the March 4 Texas primary, for example, about 2.8 million Democrats went to the polls. Clinton won by a margin of 100,000 votes. For that, she was awarded 65 delegates, with 61 going to Obama. On election night, close to 1 million Democrats went to party caucuses that even Democratic officials conceded were greatly disorganized. Many had already voted that day—Obama had encouraged his supporters to vote both day and night—and, by the end of the evening, Obama had more caucus support than Clinton, although just how much is unclear. Obama was awarded 38 delegates from the caucuses to Clinton's 29. So for the state as a whole, Obama walked away with 99 delegates to Clinton's 94, even though Clinton was the clear winner of the primary.

"I had no idea how bizarre it is," Clinton said of the Texas system shortly before primary day. "We have grown men crying over it." That's no excuse for her loss—her campaign counts among its staff some of the most experienced hands in the Democratic party, people who certainly know how caucuses work—but she is right in suggesting that the whole system is crazy.

And Texas wasn't the only oddity in the race; sometimes states worked together in strange combinations. For example, in the New Jersey primary, Clinton received 602,000 votes to Obama's 492,000; she won 59 delegates to his 48. In the Idaho caucuses, Obama got 16,880 votes to 3,655 for Clinton; he won 15 delegates, and Clinton won three. Put them together, and Clinton won a bit more than 605,000 votes to Obama's 508,000, yet Obama won 63 delegates to Clinton's 62. Obama's Idaho win more than negated Clinton's victory in New Jersey. The one thing that can be said for certain about such a result is that it won't work that way in the general election, when Idaho will have four electoral votes and New Jersey will have 15.

Of course, Democrats have only themselves to blame, because their primary system is the result of the party's attempt satisfy demands from minorities, both racial and ideological, to abandon the winner-take-all approach.

"Jesse Jackson was a driving force behind getting rid of winner-take-all," one former party official who was involved in the reforms told me recently. "People on the ideological left were saying, 'We want to be represented throughout the process; if we get 15 percent, we want to continue in the process.' It was a basic fairness argument." In addition, small states resented the dominant roles played by big states like California and New York under a winner-take-all system. Those small states felt that a proportional process would give them greater influence, so they joined with Jackson to form a coalition against winner-take-all.

The result is what we're seeing now. If a nomination battle is close, it can go on and on and on, with no candidate able to collect enough delegates to drive the other out of the race. The system is so darned "fair" that nobody can win. It's no way to pick a presidential nominee, especially when it results in a candidate who has come up short in the popular vote.

All of which drives Team Clinton crazy. "If we were under the Republican system, which is more like the Electoral College, she'd have a 300-delegate lead," Bill Clinton said at a campaign stop in Pennsylvania in April. "I mean, Senator McCain is already the nominee because they chose a system to produce that result, and we don't have a nominee here, because the Democrats chose a system that prevents that result."

Making things worse is the fact that, as the primary season drags on, Obama has become weaker, not stronger. After being declared the presumptive nominee in many quarters of the party and the press, he lost to Clinton by 41 points in West Virginia and, a week later, by 35 points in Kentucky. If he's not exactly limping over the finish line, he's not sprinting, either. After his big loss in West Virginia, he began to wage a national campaign as if he already had the nomination locked up, even though he was taking huge hits in some important states.

But those Democrats who contributed to Clinton's blowout wins certainly aren't ready to crown Obama. And if he secures the nomination without winning the popular vote, many of them will question whether the Democratic system, for all its bend-over-backwards efforts to be fair, picked the right guy. Some mandate. **NR**

ROMAN GENN

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■ THE MIDDLE EAST

Bush Speaks

The president does Davos (in the desert)

JAY NORDLINGER

Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt

GUESS who's coming to dinner? Well, not dinner, exactly, but the answer is George W. Bush. He's giving an afternoon speech here in Sharm El Sheikh. We're gathered for the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in this part of the world. These are the Davos people: the people whose main event is held in January, high up in the Swiss Alps.

President Bush has never attended any Davos event: not in Switzerland, not in the Middle East, not anywhere else. Many of his surrogates have attended, including his secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice (who is in Sharm El Sheikh now). But Bush has decided to nod to Davos in this last year of his presidency. Sharm is his final event on a five-day Middle Eastern tour.

Davos is not Bush's most favorable environment—Davos wherever it is. Most world elites are against him, and Davos does nothing if not gather world elites. Do they dislike him more than they do Ahmadinejad, Mugabe, and Kim Jong Il? Based on my experience (ten conferences), I cannot say no.

First to address this throng is Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, our (nominal) host. Then comes King Abdullah of Jordan (as distinct from King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, who is not the conferencing type). And then comes the American president. Klaus Schwab introduces him, as he has the other leaders. Schwab is the founder and father of the World Economic Forum.

Bush is greeted with very, very little applause—certainly as compared with Mubarak and Abdullah. And that's as much applause as he will get. When he takes the microphone, Bush says, "Thanks for inviting me. Klaus said, 'It's about time you showed up.'" And then he gives the kind of speech he has given since 9/11: about freedom, democracy, an open economy, and all that "neocon" jazz.

He says that democracy has taken root in places where it once seemed "unimaginable"—places such as Chile, Indonesia, Poland, and South Korea. These countries have "different histories and different traditions," yet they all made the democratic transition: and did it "on their own terms."

Bush notes that these changes took place in the second half of the 20th century. And "I strongly believe that if leaders like those of you in this room act with vision and resolve, the first half of 21st century can be the time when similar advances reach the Middle East."

He later pitches for economic reform, citing "the entrepreneurial spirit of your people" (which is indeed potent, when unleashed). And he pitches for free trade, saying that he himself will stay strong: rejecting protectionism. Women, he continues, should play a greater role in the Middle East. And "I applaud Egypt. Egypt is a model for the development of professional women." (Who knew?)

In due course, Bush slaps down the notion that democracy is a Western value, which America seeks to impose on unwilling people. "This is a condescending form of moral relativism," he says. "The truth is that freedom is a universal right—the Almighty's gift to every man, woman, and child on the face of the earth."

Neither will he accept that democracy is incompatible with Islam. Democracies "make a place for people of religious belief," he says. Consider America: "one of the world's leading democracies" and "one of the most religious nations in the world."

Nor should democracy be confused with majoritarianism, he says: the right of 51 percent to lord it over 49 percent. And "too often in the Middle East, politics has consisted of one leader in power and the opposition in jail."

Bush plugs for human rights—in Iran, Syria, and elsewhere—and renews his call for an independent Palestinian state. (Bush is the first president to make such a state a goal of U.S. policy.) He outlines his vision of a free and prospering Middle East, with

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terror and tyranny tamed—and says he has "no doubt" that the region's people will make this vision a reality.

"May God be with you on the journey," he concludes, "and the United States of America will always be at your side."

Well, then. There is some applause, but it is fairly weak, and Bush hastens off the stage.

He has not delivered his speech in his best fashion, it's true—he delivered it in just about his worst. He was faint, for one thing—the microphone should have been turned up (or he should have spoken up). And he was lackluster, workaday. He was so subdued, he was practically sleepy. Perhaps he was tired at the end of this regional tour. Or perhaps he thought a low-key style would convey modesty.

If so, it didn't work—not with this audience. He would be thoroughly denounced for arrogance (among other things).

Throughout the speech, the audience was restless and somewhat noisy. Some people left the hall, others milled about. Around me, there were some harrumphing, snorting remarks. During Mubarak's and Abdullah's speeches, you could have heard a pin drop. There was much less respect for the guy who was elected (truly elected)—and, in a way, maybe that's as it should be.

Bush-hatred is one of the most interesting phenomena of our time. It is also one of the most disturbing. Take this speech he has delivered: What if Bill Clinton had given it, word for word? What would the reaction have been? And Barack Obama? I suspect they would have been on their feet cheering, throwing their hotel keys at the stage.

I remember when Tony Blair spoke at Davos in 2005. (He's here in Sharm El Sheikh, too.) This was right after Bush's second inaugural address. And he said to Davos—I paraphrase just slightly—"What's wrong with us progressives? I thought we were supposed to be all for freedom and against tyranny. Why did we hate that speech so much?"

Another thought occurs to me, too: Bush stands for sweeping change in the Middle East. And, at this conference, he was talking to an auditoriumful of people for whom life is pretty good. On the whole, they are affluent, and I'm sure that many of them—if not most—have servants at home. My fellow attendees have positions of power and influence. They travel internationally, including to gatherings like this. They are "haves," societal winners.

And who is Bush's Middle Eastern constituency? You could argue, they are the poor, the imprisoned, the hopeless. The poor need liberalization more than the rich. And no one in jail attends conferences. Bush's speech would have gone down much better in a Syrian prison.

Bush's speech would have gone down much better in a Syrian prison.

In the hours after the speech, I hear many reviews, few of them good. An American woman in a lounge is speaking with some Middle Eastern delegates. One of them asks her, tentatively, what she thought of the president's speech. "Oh, I *hate* Bush," she says. That is a jarring sentence to hear: "I *hate* Bush."

She goes on to say that "democracy is overrated." She says it again, so much does she like the phrase. And then this: "His wife, Laura, seems nice. But the rumor is he hits her, you know. Sometimes I see her on television, and I'm thinking, 'Poor woman.'" But then our American lady seems to have a prick of conscience: "I don't know—maybe they have a great relationship."

Yeah, maybe they do.

When people talk about the "ugly American"—the ugly American abroad—they mean a bigot or ignoramus in a floral shirt and shorts, barking for some ketchup. Since first traveling abroad as a teenager, I've had a different conception altogether.

In the evening, at a lovely party by the Red Sea, I fall in with some European journalists based in Cairo. One says, "Does Bush have a speech impediment of some kind?" Another exclaims, "Bush doesn't even write his own speeches! He has speechwriters!" The scorn, derision, and unreason are thick.

And then the discussion turns to Barack Obama: who was okay on the Middle East, according to one of these journalists—until he was brought to heel by the "Jewish lobby."

Anyway . . . Elsewhere at the party, different journalists complain that Bush has lectured the Egyptians—and other Arabs—and insulted them, on their own soil. Could be. But I wonder, "What sort of mind would be insulted by what Bush has said? And are we to admire such a mind?" Besides which, if you liked Bush, you could claim that he "spoke truth to power."

Needless to say, there is closet support of Bush here, and whispered support—some proud, unapologetic support, too. Some of it comes from Hamid Karzai, the president of Afghanistan.

A few of us meet him for coffee and a talk, and I say, "There's a lot of contempt expressed for President Bush at conferences like this. What is your opinion of him?" Karzai says that he, along with Afghanistan at large, has nothing but "respect, admiration, and praise" for Bush. Well, he *would* say that, wouldn't he? After all, Afghanistan has been reborn since 2001.

Still, Karzai makes a moving statement, ending, "We are extremely grateful. The Afghans owe George Bush and the United States a lot."

One of our crew teases Karzai: "You're the only one who supports him." Karzai responds that he doesn't care—he's not going to criticize someone just because others do; he will not "jump on a bandwagon." "Others can say what they have to say. I have my own opinion. And my judgment is one of praise and recognition."

He even allows that he has argued with U.S. senators over Bush, irritating them. I think I can see that, can't you?

Later that day, some of us sit down with Barham Salih, the deputy prime minister of Iraq. He gives a hopeful report, although one mixed with caveats. Afterward, I speak to a Continental friend of mine—not a hawk, and not a conservative, but a sensible liberal. A "liberal with sanity," to use Ed Koch's self-description.

And he says, "You know, I think they just might pull this off—I think the Iraq War just might work. And wouldn't my leftist friends go crazy about that? They rejoice in every setback; they jeer every advance. And what about those 12 million people who voted, dipping their fingers purple? Are we supposed to say that that means nothing?"

Yes, it just might work. And what'll they say then? In any event, the final chapter about George W. Bush is far from written. **NR**

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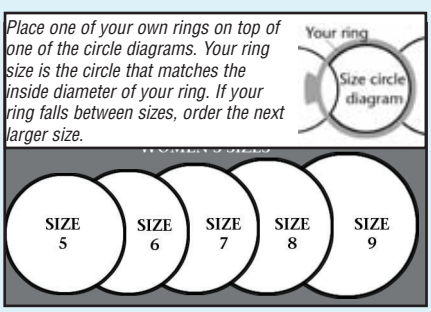
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Your ring
Size circle diagram
SIZE 5
SIZE 6
SIZE 7
SIZE 8
SIZE 9

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Cut (58 facets)	Brilliant	Brilliant
Color	"D" Colorless	"D" Colorless
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Nuclear Power?

Yes, please

IAIN MURRAY

My grandfather was a coal miner. My father was an electrical engineer. Energy appears to be in my blood. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when I was growing up in the north of England, we seemed to be heading for a new age of energy production. Just to the south of us was a community called Seaton Carew, in the county of Durham. It needed more electricity, and a new coal-fired power station was proposed. The people objected. As Ian Fells, emeritus professor of energy conversion at the nearby University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne puts it, they said, "Why can't we have one of those new, clean nuclear power stations?" My neighbors got their wish. In 1969, work began on the Hartlepool Nuclear Plant. Since 1983, it has provided 3 percent of the United Kingdom's energy.

Next year, decommissioning work will begin on the plant. The local people are opposed to a replacement nuclear facility. What happened? The answer is strangely universal. Around the Western world, environmentalists did what they do best: They exploited fear and massaged science to make nuclear power morally unacceptable, impeding progress and innovation. Yet today they find their case weakened—perhaps fatally—by another concern born from another campaign of fear: global warming. The hysteria environmentalists have built up around carbon emissions may lead to a new dawn for nuclear power. Given that, the case for new nuclear is almost unassailable.

Throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was considerable technical discussion about the safety of nuclear power throughout the world, and local court cases against new construction had been common. The Calvert Cliffs Coordinating Committee, for example, delayed the building of a reactor in Maryland after a court victory over the Atomic Energy Commission in 1971. Construction on subsequent projects slowed as a result. Mass popular opposition to the "new, clean nuclear power stations" worldwide, however, seems to have begun in Germany. Shortly after work started in Hartlepool, a new plant was proposed for the tiny southwest German village of Wyhl. Opposition grew and, by the time work began in 1975, a mass movement was ready. Thirty thousand protesters gathered, seized control of the site, and occupied it. The plant was never built.

The German protesters did not rest on their laurels after this victory. In 1977, 20,000 people protested the use of salt mines at Gorleben for nuclear-waste storage. Growing bolder, they turned to open violence. At Brokdorf in 1981, 100,000 demonstrators surrounded the site of a proposed nuclear plant, confronting 10,000 police. According to the *New York Times* report, "groups of hundreds of demonstrators armed with gasoline bombs, sticks, stones and high-powered slingshots" attacked the police, injuring 21 of them.

It was about this time that I noticed a cultural invasion of England by Germany. Dozens of students at my high school started sporting large yellow buttons depicting a smiley-faced sun surrounded by the German words "ATOMKRAFT? NEIN DANKE!" ("Nuclear power? No thanks!") In 1979, the movement had reached such levels of power that it was able to establish its own sustainable political party. Die Grünen (the Greens) had among their early leaders a roll call of radical leftists. Among them was the tiny and articulate Petra Kelly, a former European Commission bureaucrat who had been educated in the United States and had worked on the Robert F. Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey campaigns in 1968. Others included former student radical Rudi Dutschke, who followed Gramsci in advocating a "long march through the institutions," the novelist Heinrich Böll, and the artist Joseph Beuys. Anti-nuclear activism was the core of their appeal and remains a central plank today. They have indeed marched through the institutions, even claiming the foreign ministry from 1998 to 2005 and entering into a state-level

Mr. Murray is a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute and the author of *The Really Inconvenient Truths: Seven Environmental Catastrophes Liberals Won't Tell You About—Because They Helped Cause Them.*

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Does St. Bozo's Parish No Longer Amuse You?

In many Catholic parishes today, the sense of the sacred — of mystery and majesty and even of worship itself — has largely been banished. The bells, incense, votive candles, and Communion rail are gone. The Tabernacle with the reserved Sacrament can't be found. Elegant statues of our friends, the saints, are locked in the basement, replaced by balloons, banners with greeting-card sentiments, and other dime-store decorations. The organ gathers cobwebs. The sanctuary has become a stage. And the kneelers are now being ripped out, the crucifix taken down.

It's virtually impossible to pray before (or after) Mass because of all the chatter and backslapping. The Creed is left unsaid. Homilists pander with (unfunny) jokes and (not quite the latest) pop-psychology blather. The words of the liturgy are improvised upon by politically correct clerics and lectors with weird agendas — God our Father becomes "God our Parent," the Son of God becomes the "Child of God," etc. And we must clap, clap, clap for the band and the liturgical dancers and the clowns — we aren't making a joyful noise unto the Lord, but only unto the (amateurish) entertainers.

The primary purpose of the Mass has been transformed from receiving Christ and worshiping the Almighty into "celebrating community" — i.e., celebrating our wonderful selves. One influential liturgical "expert" has said the Mass shouldn't convey "a feeling of infinity or eternity or the world beyond," for it's really about "communal sensitivity" among parishioners. But this touchie-feelie Catholicism — where the Sign of Peace becomes the high point of the Mass — has no power or magnetism. Normal people seldom get out of bed on Sunday morning in search of warm huggies.

Catholics who are alienated by trivialized or freakish Masses — who are sick of being guinea pigs in a liturgical lab — often jump ship for an Evangelical church, or just stay in bed. Indeed, Mass attendance among Catholics has dropped from 70%, just before the liturgical experiments began, to 25% today! And today, two out of three Catholics don't believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist — which isn't surprising, given that *how* we worship has a profound effect on *what* we believe about the meaning of the Mass.

The liturgical experiments have largely been a miserable failure. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a monthly traditional Catholic magazine, agree with then-Cardinal Ratzinger that our damaged liturgy needs to be repaired. We articulate the Catholic Faith in all its splendor and truth. We don't just chronicle liturgical horror stories, we cover the full range of issues of concern to traditional Catholics. According to *The Remnant*, we're "a veritable road map for lost and wandering Catholics." Subscribe today and take heart!

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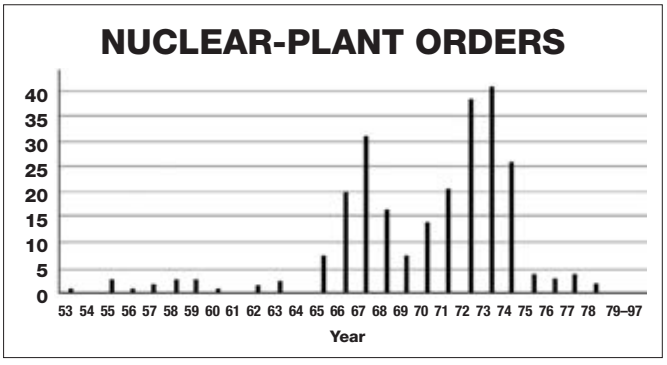
coalition with Germany's nominal conservatives, the Christian Democrats. The Green virus spread dramatically out from Germany, infecting the politics of most developed nations.

I have spent a little time outlining this early history because it is important to recognize that the anti-nuclear movement was already ascendant before the Three Mile Island incident in 1979. On May 2, 1977, no doubt inspired by the German protesters, 1,414 people were arrested protesting a nuclear plant in Seabrook, N.H. Three Mile Island merely galvanized an already-active movement. Nuclear-plant orders had in fact peaked in 1973, and fell off sharply after 1974 as energy-conservation concerns reigned supreme in the wake of the Arab oil embargo (see chart). The anti-nuclear movement's achievement was not to stop nuclear power, but to take it off the table as an option after 1979.



SOURCE: NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE/PBS *FRONTLINE*

FEAR AND LOATHING

How did they succeed? By creating a global zeitgeist—an appropriately German word—holding as an article of faith that nuclear power is a severe danger in all sorts of ways. Their arguments revolved around three main propositions: that nuclear plants are dangerous because they can blow up or melt down; that nuclear waste is extremely and persistently dangerous; and that nuclear power and nuclear weapons are intrinsically linked. All these arguments are overstated.

As to the safety of nuclear power stations, there is now a significant history to demonstrate that these concerns are no longer justified, even if they may have had some precautionary legitimacy in the 1970s. It has long been recognized that the Chernobyl accident was caused by features unique to the Soviet-style RBMK (*reaktor bolshoy moshchnosti kanalniy*—high-power channel reactor). When reactors of that sort get too hot, the rate of the nuclear reaction increases—the reverse of what happens in most Western reactors. Moreover, RBMK reactors do not have containment shells that prevent radioactive material from getting out. The worse incident in the history of nuclear power, Chernobyl killed just 56 people and made 20 square miles of land uninhabitable. (The exclusion zone has now become a haven for wildlife, which is thriving.) There are suggestions that hundreds or thousands more may die because of long-term effects, but these estimates are based on the controversial Linear Non-Threshold (LNT) theory about the effects of radiation.

Official EPA doctrine, based on the LNT theory, holds that no level of radiation is safe, and that the maximum allowable exposure to radiation is an extremely stringent 15 millirems (mrem) per year. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, researchers discovered that 600,000 mrem was a sufficient dose of radiation to kill anyone exposed to it, and 400,000 mrem killed half the people exposed. Symptoms of radiation sickness develop at 75,000–100,000 mrem. By extrapolating linearly, the model holds that there is no level of radiation at which someone is not adversely affected (hence "non-threshold"). Therefore, if a million people are exposed to a very low dose of radiation—say 500 mrem—then 6,250 of them will die of cancer brought on by the exposure. At least according to the theory.

But this is mere assumption, with no epidemiological evidence to back it up. As Prof. Donald W. Miller Jr. of the University of Washington School of Medicine wrote in 2004, "Known and documented health-damaging effects of radiation—radiation sickness, leukemia, and death—are only seen with doses greater than 100 rem [which is to say, 100,000 mrem]. The risk of doses less than 100 rem is a black box into which regulators extend 'extrapolated data.' There are no valid epidemiologic or experimental data to support linearly extrapolated predictions of cancer resulting from low doses of radiation."

In fact, Americans are naturally exposed to around 200 mrem a year of background radiation. In some places around the world that background level is much higher. In Ramsar, Iran, thanks to the presence of natural radium in the vicinity, residents get 26,000 mrem a year, but there is no increased incidence of cancer or shortened lifespan. This is a real problem for the LNT theory. The predicted deaths and cancer cases haven't materialized.

In Britain, much hay was made by Greenpeace and other organizations of the emergence of greater incidences of leukemia in children living near the nuclear-reprocessing plant at Sellafield in the early 1990s. But such "cancer clusters" appear all over the place, and are just as likely to appear next to an organic farm—to borrow the formulation of British environment writer Rob Johnston—as next to a nuclear facility. There does not appear to be any greater incidence of leukemia in the children of those who work in the nuclear industry. In fact, there is so little evidence of significant safety risks related to nuclear power that the British government "continues to believe that new nuclear power stations would pose very small risks to safety, security, health and proliferation," according to a recent analysis it undertook. It also believes that "these risks are minimized and sensibly managed by industry."

Nuclear waste is a stickier problem, but one that can be safely managed. In most American reactors, fuel rods need to be replaced every 18 months or so. When they are taken out, they contain large amounts of radioactive fission products and produce enough heat that they need to be cooled in water. Radioactivity declines as the isotopes decay and the rods produce less heat. It is the very nature of radioactivity that, as materials decay, they become less dangerous and easier to handle. The question is what to do with the waste when space runs out.

In most of the rest of the world, fuel reprocessing extracts usable uranium and plutonium. The highly radioactive waste that remains is not a large amount. By 2040, Britain will have just 70,000 cubic feet of such waste. This volume could be contained in a cube measuring 42 feet on each side. Moreover, most of Britain's waste is left over from its nuclear-weapons program. The British government has determined that "geological disposal"—burial deep underground—provides the best available approach to dealing with existing and also with new nuclear waste, arguing that "the balance of

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ethical considerations does not rule out the option of new nuclear power."

In the U.S., unfortunately, reprocessing was stopped during the Carter administration, in the naïve belief that other countries would follow suit and thereby reduce the amount of plutonium available for weapons proliferation. For that reason, the U.S. has rather more nuclear waste than any other nation, about 144 million pounds of it. Since 1987, the U.S. has focused its own efforts at geological disposal at a remote Nevada site called Yucca Mountain, located within a former nuclear-test facility.

The story of Yucca Mountain is well-known—it has become a political football as pro- and anti-nuclear forces try to accelerate or delay (or even stop) the facility's commissioning. Legal challenges have focused on the question of how much radiation will escape to the public from the facility—over a timeline of a million years. The Department of Energy has calculated that exposure will be no more than 0.98 mrem per year, up to a million years into the future. Even those who hold to the stringent LNT view of radiation should be satisfied.

With that settled, the Department of Energy announced in 2006 that Yucca Mountain would open for business in 2017. But later that year, when Harry Reid was chosen as Senate majority leader, he announced, "Yucca Mountain is dead. It'll never happen." The project's budget has been slashed. As a result, the question of storing America's nuclear waste remains open, even as more and more of that waste piles up around the country.

On the issue of persistence, bear in mind that reprocessing the fuel means that, after ten years, the fission products are only one-thousandth as radioactive as they were initially. After 500 years, they will be less radioactive than the uranium ore they originally came from. The waste question is therefore simply one of storage. It is a political, not a scientific, dispute.

As for the problem of nuclear proliferation, the unpleasant fact is that every country that has been willing to invest the time and effort required to make a nuclear weapon has succeeded. The existence of nuclear power plants in Western countries has nothing to do with this. In fact, in order to keep plants economical, fuel rods are kept in the reactor long enough that the weapons-grade plutonium, Pu-239, absorbs another neutron and becomes the much less dangerous Pu-240. To be effective in a weapon, a given volume of plutonium must contain no more than 7 percent Pu-240. Spent fuel from civilian nuclear plants is typically composed of about 26 percent Pu-240. This makes it extremely difficult even for experts to use in the manufacture of nuclear weapons—and well nigh impossible for amateurs.

There is some concern that nuclear power plants present an attractive target for terrorists. After the attacks of Osama bin Laden's impromptu air force in 2001, the Department of Energy commissioned a study into the effects of a fully fueled jetliner's hitting a reactor containment vessel at maximum speed. In none of the simulations was containment breached. Given the massive investment that would be needed to compromise a nuclear power station, it is highly unlikely that terrorists would seek to attack such a hard target—especially when their revealed preference has been for soft targets offering the maximum possible loss of civilian life.

The world's experience with nuclear power, therefore, has confounded the arguments of the environmentalists. It has proven safe and reliable—and if you still need convincing of this, remember that the second-worst nuclear incident, Three Mile Island, saw a destroyed reactor confined with no casualties.

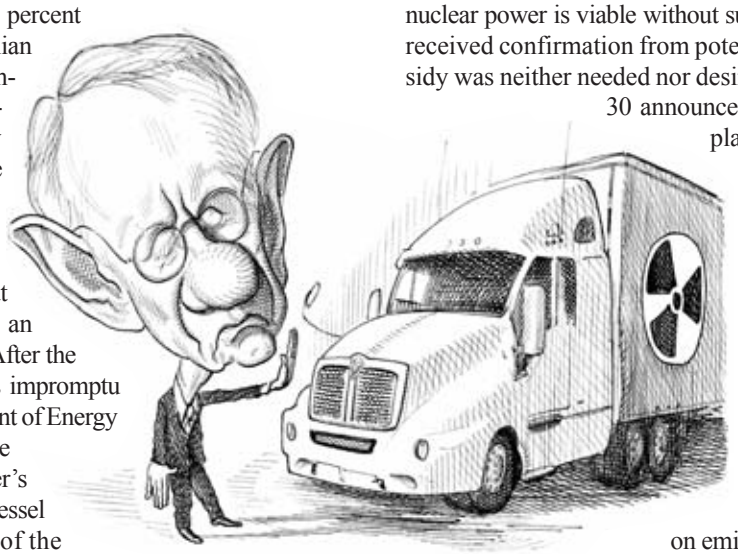
ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS

With safety concerns off the table, the real question remaining as to whether we should move forward with nuclear power is one of economics. Up until now, the high costs of construction and decommissioning have made nuclear more expensive than coal and natural gas. That, however, is likely to change, and it is the environmentalists who will have brought about the change.

The Congressional Budget Office recently released a report finding that nuclear power costs around $72 per megawatt-hour of energy, compared with $55 for coal and $57 for natural gas. But those estimates reflect very high construction costs. When it comes to operating costs, nuclear power is much less expensive. Therefore, the economics of nuclear power depend to a large extent on reducing those construction costs—both the direct costs of building (which is highly dependent on construction time) and the costs of regulation. It should be feasible to reduce significantly the costs of regulation by various means. Under its Nuclear Power 2010 program, for example, the U.S. Department of Energy has offered interested parties the opportunity to operate under a surprisingly non-bureaucratic model for licensing based on the French system. (Less responsibly, for the first six plants, the program also offers to subsidize 25 percent to 50 percent of any construction-cost overruns due to delays.) Nuclear plants have never been built anywhere in an environment of low regulatory costs, so it is hard to estimate to what degree deregulation could reduce expenses without jeopardizing safety.

Those high construction costs have led many to argue that nuclear power is intrinsically uneconomic without subsidy. This is contradicted by the British government's recent analysis, which found that nuclear power is viable without subsidies. The British government received confirmation from potential nuclear operators that subsidy was neither needed nor desired. In the U.S., there have been 30 announcements of plans for new nuclear plants, totaling 40,000 megawatts of capacity, which would power 32 million households.

In all the hysteria about global warming, environmentalists have, for the most part, agreed on one thing above all—that the use of fossil fuels must be made more expensive. Every proposal currently under consideration for the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions seeks to raise prices as a brake on emissions, through either a cap-and-



ROMAN GENN

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trade system or a carbon tax. Once this expense is included in the calculations, nuclear power becomes extremely competitive, and remains considerably cheaper than wind power. The Congressional Budget Office found that nuclear power is the most attractive source of electricity once the price of carbon emissions reaches $45 a ton. If natural-gas prices increase as rapidly as they have done recently, then that figure will come down even further. The British-government review found that nuclear provides "economic benefit regardless of the carbon price." Moreover, it provides carbon reductions much more cheaply than wind power does. Using nuclear power, it costs 60 cents to eliminate a ton of CO_2 emissions, as opposed to a staggering $100 per ton for onshore wind power. It is true that a carbon tax amounts to a subsidy for nuclear power. But if carbon emissions are to be taxed, then that is the only subsidy that nuclear power will ever need.

Keep in mind that many of the current arguments used against nuclear power by environmentalists are economic in tone—that uranium is running out (not true even in the medium term); that decommissioning is expensive and/or will be a burden on the taxpayer (it is expensive, but the cost could be met by requiring the operator to pay into a fund during the reactor's life); or that building reactors takes too long (true, but most of that is the fault of red tape). The Canadian company ACEL has managed to shorten the time for building a reactor—from groundbreaking to coming online—to four years. Such a schedule should significantly reduce construction costs which, as we have seen, are the main impediment to nuclear cost-effectiveness.

NUCLEAR IS GREENER

Beyond economics, if you take seriously the issue of greenhouse gases—whether as a climate alarmist or as someone with an open mind who believes in a degree of prudence—then the case for nuclear power is unassailable. James Lovelock, famous as the father of the "Gaia Hypothesis," has said nuclear power represents humanity's only hope to escape runaway global warming. Yet most environmental groups refuse to recognize the impracticality of opposing both greenhouse-gas emissions and our most effective way of reducing them. For those groups, the problem isn't "dirty" energy, but energy itself. They presumably agree with one of their sages, Amory Lovins, who told *Playboy* in 1977, "It'd be a little short of disastrous for us to discover a source of clean, cheap, abundant energy because of what we might do with it."

For the rest of us, what we might do with it is the whole point—we might increase human prosperity and welfare. If we're determined to price coal out of the energy market, then nuclear is it. If we're determined to cure our "addiction to oil," then we will need nuclear facilities to power our plug-in hybrid electric cars or to make the hydrogen for our fuel cells. This is not a green pipe dream. In fact, given the way automotive technology is developing, it is plausible that a majority of vehicles sold in the U.S. by 2020 will use electric power trains, increasing our need for electricity. We might not even need to close our coal mines, since we can get more energy from the uranium found in coal than from burning the coal itself.

Those denizens of Seaton Carew had it right. Nuclear power is clean. In a sense it is still new. Thirty years after their radical predecessors took nuclear energy away from the people of the world, environmentalists might have inadvertently given it back. *Atomkraft? Ja, bitte!* **NR**

■ AT WAR

Two Decades Late

A post–Cold War military for a post–Cold War world

FREDERICK W. KAGAN

More than five years after the War on Terror began, the strains it has placed on the U.S. military are beginning to show. Some observers have noticed increasing signs of tension between the Pentagon and our commanders in the field. Inter-service rivalries have started to kick up again as the Marines talk about getting back to their boats, the Navy talks about recapitalizing parts of its fleet, and the Air Force takes up the case of the F-22, the Joint Strike Fighter, and so on, with reference to more-or-less distant threats.

At one level, these problems seem to have a common cause: the persistent notion that the current large-scale deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan will be short-lived, and we need to be ready for what comes next. In reality, that notion is not the cause of these strains, but a symptom of problems that go back much farther. Military policymakers view the current level of deployment as an aberration. They do this because they have to—because the military system they're part of is not designed to support such a level in the long term. Recognizing this fact means recognizing the unpalatable truth that the old ways won't work in the 21st century. The world has changed, and the threats we face have changed, and that means it is time for a fundamental reorganization of our national-security apparatus.

It wouldn't be the first time the military has undergone sweeping change. The current U.S. national-security organization was designed during the Cold War to face the threats of that struggle. The National Security Act of 1947 created the Air Force and what became the Defense Department, and reshaped the intelligence agencies. The structure was tweaked occasionally, but in very minor ways, until the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, which made important changes (although nowhere near as fundamental as those made by the National Security Act). The U.S. military has remained virtually unchanged in its basic structure and function since then.

In the 1980s, the enemy was the Soviet Union. Although China was a potential foe, war with the People's Republic seemed unlikely, and an alliance between the USSR and the PRC even more unlikely. The significance of the Iranian Revolution of 1979 was submerged by the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan that same year, as well as by the subsequent Iran–Iraq War. The Reagan administration, like most of its predecessors, viewed troubles in the Third World primarily within the context of Soviet expansionism rather than as an expression of homegrown tensions.

Every aspect of our peacetime armed forces—and our national-

Mr. Kagan is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and the co-author with Thomas Donnelly of *Ground Truth: The Future of U.S. Landpower.*

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security structure—was crafted specifically to meet the Soviet challenge, and in the mid-1980s that challenge seemed daunting. Massive Soviet and Warsaw Pact military forces were stationed in Central Europe. The Soviet fleet had been steadily expanding for years in every theater, including the Pacific. Soviet bombers and attack submarines threatened to cut off NATO's sea lines of communication; Soviet armies were ready to invade the Middle East, to defend against China, and to threaten Japan. And finally, there was the dramatic expansion of the Soviet nuclear arsenal in the 1970s.

The Soviet threat was enormous, and meeting it required mobilization of the full military resources of the NATO countries and their allies. We had to face the possibility of overwhelming war in every dimension of every theater at the same time. Any such war, it was expected, would be short and decisive ("apocalyptic" might be a more appropriate term). This assumption came from a number of factors.

In 1973, the Arab–Israeli Yom Kippur War consumed in a week as many tanks as NATO had in Europe. American military leaders watching that conflict were stunned by the speed and lethality of modern armored warfare. The Soviets had already concluded (for a variety of reasons) that if a European war broke out, their best chance of success lay in speed. They intended to get from the inter-German border to the English Channel in 30 days. NATO was aware of their intentions.

Political considerations required defending against such a threat at the border. Even though it's virtually impossible to stop an armored invasion at its source, the Germans were understandably reluctant to see their country as expendable, so they insisted that NATO be capable of doing just that, and the U.S. worked hard to meet this expectation. U.S. military doctrine and organization were geared to fighting hard from the outset, reinforcing immediately, and winning quickly. The assumption was that if rapid victory did not come, the entire U.S. nation would mobilize behind the shield of the volunteer armed forces and would overwhelm the Soviets, as it had overwhelmed the Nazis and the Imperial Japanese.

From the military's standpoint, there was no real need to think about how the war would end or what to do after it did. Everyone assumed that any large-scale war would lead to a full-blown nuclear exchange, and there didn't seem to be much point in post-war planning for such a scenario. If the war somehow stopped short of the apocalypse, then it could pretty much only be a return to the status quo ante, with neither side holding the other's territory, so there was no need to plan for an occupation either.

GAME, SET, AND MATCH

Everything else the U.S. military did during the Cold War was subordinate to the requirement to be ready for the big one. Since, happily, we never did fight the big one, it turns out that all of those "distractions"—Korea, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Cuba, El Salvador, Panama, and so on—actually were the real thing as far as fighting went. But we never configured our military specifically to undertake them, because they remained less important, even collectively, than the need to be ready to stop the Soviets in the "central front" (Europe), the Pacific, and the Middle East.

Boiling all this down, the basic assumptions shaping the Cold War military were that all services were equally important, all theaters would be under tremendous strain, speed of response in every dimension would be critical, and the war would be short—or, if it was long, then it would look like World War II. As a result, we built a military that divided defense-budget dollars roughly evenly among the services; decentralized control of the operational theaters to their commanders, who reported only to the secretary of defense (thereby pulling the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff out of the chain of command); and made the Pentagon responsible for rushing every available force to the fighting theaters as quickly as possible and mobilizing the nation behind them.

The old challenge, on parade

MIKHAIL METZEL/AP

Basically, the purpose of the entire military establishment, especially as redesigned in 1986, was not to fight, but to be ready to fight. When speed of reaction and winning the first battle in every theater are key, then the day-to-day readiness of every aspect of the force is key. Anything that detracts from that readiness—like the smaller wars that we actually engaged in regularly—is therefore bad. The structure that embodied these principles was superbly designed to meet the challenges it faced, but it is terribly designed for the world of today.

No single enemy or collection of enemies has replaced the Soviet Union's vast and omnipresent military threat. After a period of confusion in the 1990s, the U.S. military has gradually recognized that it's going to have to spend a lot of time actually conducting military operations—everything from high-end mechanized warfare to peacekeeping and disaster relief. Whether we're talking about the Global War on Terror or a "long war" or a "protracted conflict," the critical issue is that the military sees that "rapid decisive opera-

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tions" are not the key to victory in the current era, and that we can "win the first battle"—the main aim of the 1980s military—but lose the war.

The Cold War force was designed on a principle of balance—among services and between theaters. Today's world offers nothing like that situation. One combatant command—CENTCOM—is responsible for two ongoing major counter-insurgency operations (Iraq and Afghanistan), one significant counter-terrorism operation (the Horn of Africa), one major non-proliferation challenge (Iran), and one major regional-collapse scenario (Pakistan). No other combatant command faces anything like that burden.

For reasons of NATO politics more than military sense, European Command has nominal responsibility for most of the war fighting in Afghanistan, but the burden for fighting that war on the ground does not fall heavily on the supreme allied commander's shoulders. Pacific Command faces many potential threats—the Koreas, China, terrorists in Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as counter-piracy operations—but its main concern is the traditional Cold War mission of being prepared for possible conflicts, rather than fighting day to day. Southern Command is engaged in a variety of missions, such as directing counter-narcotics efforts throughout Latin America and dealing with Venezuela's blowhard leader, Hugo Chávez. But, again, the strains it faces are not of the same magnitude as those that face CENTCOM. It remains to be seen how the new Africa Command will shake out. There's certainly enough on that continent to pose a serious challenge to any new commander, but unless the U.S. becomes much more actively involved in ongoing conflicts in Africa, AFRICOM, too, is unlikely to be overwhelmed.

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

Does it really make sense to have one commander overseeing almost all the major military activities in the most vital theater while the others remain relatively unengaged? Possibly, depending on what role one thinks the combatant commander should have. But the structure was not designed for such an eventuality, and the strains are already showing. For instance, who actually runs Iraq and Afghanistan? In principle, the CENTCOM commander (currently the acting commander, Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey, though Gen. David Petraeus, currently commander of MNF-Iraq, has been nominated to replace him) should run both. In practice, he runs neither. Gen. David McKiernan, commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), will own allied forces in Afghanistan when he replaces Gen. Dan McNeill, but he reports via a German general to America's EUCOM commander, Gen. Bantz Craddock, because Afghanistan is a NATO mission. General Petraeus, on the other hand, is still nominally Dempsey's subordinate but in practice has been reporting directly to the president since taking his current post. Why? Because Bush, like all his predecessors, wants the unvarnished truth from the man who is on the ground fighting a major war. Petraeus's predecessor, Gen. George Casey, also reported directly to the president. So what is CENTCOM's role? It's hard to say. It is clear, though, that the situation in CENTCOM today is nothing like what the authors of the Goldwater-Nichols reform imagined. The nature of current conflicts is clearly straining the command structure in ways it was never meant to withstand.

Another unanticipated strain has emerged between the war fighters and the force providers. In the 1980s context, this strain was minimal; both groups spent most of their time preparing for war. In a short war, it wouldn't have mattered either: The military surged a very large force to Kuwait in 1990, but no serious tensions developed because the war was brief and the force was rapidly withdrawn. But the large and protracted deployment of U.S. forces into combat in the CENTCOM theater was never foreseen by the designers of the Cold War military.

Wars wear out people and equipment fast. Both must be replaced. But replacing them costs money and organizational effort that distracts from preparing for future conflict. War also disrupts peacetime training routines, to the detriment of preparedness for contingencies. The Marines are concerned that too many of their people have not been trained for their supposed primary mission of forced-entry operations. The Army is worried that many of its tankers have never qualified a tank and many of its brigade commanders have never practiced maneuvering their brigades except in the context of counter-insurgency. Strains on the personnel also lead to much higher levels of attrition, especially among officers and senior non-commissioned officers. Good people are leaving, and it takes time to make a brigade commander or a command sergeant major—a good couple of decades in most cases.

Many of these problems could be alleviated by reducing force levels in the active theaters, but the war fighters naturally want more forces. Who decides how to set priorities between fighting current wars and preparing for future ones? Right now, the answer is the secretary of defense and the president, both civilians. Under Goldwater-Nichols, there is no uniformed officer in the Pentagon whose job it is to win the wars we're fighting.

By statute, the job of the Joint Chiefs is to support current conflicts (without getting involved operationally) and to prepare for future ones, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs is the senior military adviser to the president. None of them, however, have the statutory responsibility to win ongoing wars. That job is reserved for the combatant commanders and their subordinates. In the Cold War, this division of labor was not a problem—no one was going to be worrying about future conflicts when the Red Army rolled across the inter-German border. Now it creates a constant tension that requires intervention by the two most senior civilians in the chain of command. To make matters worse, only the force providers have a presence at the center of power, while the war fighters are scattered around the globe.

HANDS OFF MY PIE

The primary purpose of the Goldwater-Nichols legislation was to improve inter-service cooperation. The famous incident during the invasion of Grenada in which an officer in one service reportedly had to use a calling card and a public phone to call for fire support from another was an example of this problem. The legislation has tremendously improved inter-service cooperation in many ways, including the creation of the combatant commanders, who have responsibility for all U.S. forces in their areas, from every service.

The approach of dividing the defense pie evenly among the services has yielded invaluable benefits. Investments in precision air power (in the Air Force, Navy, and Marines) have been tremendously important to our operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as the

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ability to put large or small ordnance exactly on a designated target at very short notice has transformed the "kinetic" (combat) part of counter-insurgency operations. And the strains on the Air Force and the Navy to provide this support in Iraq and Afghanistan are manageable.

But the strains on the Army and the Marines created by keeping more than 180,000 pairs of boots on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan for years are orders of magnitude greater. The F-15s and *Nimitz*-class carriers designed to defeat advanced Soviet systems are perfectly useful against insurgents in headbands and sneakers waving AK-47s (although the F-15s and other aircraft are getting old and wearing out, and will need to be replaced sooner rather than later). But Humvees and trucks that were never designed for combat zones are dangerously inadequate in the face of advanced IEDs. The current conflicts are bearing disproportionately on the ground forces, something for which today's military structure was not designed.

Dangerously inadequate

The result has been pulling and tugging between the services in ways that are harmful to all. Both the administration and Congress, under both Democratic and Republican leadership, have resisted any dramatic increase in the baseline defense budget. The Air Force and Navy saw budgetary trade-offs at their expense in the first years of the current conflict, and largely accepted them. Now they are beginning to push back. The current military organization thus not only pits the services against one another—a perennial fact of life—but effectively, and unavoidably, pits some services against the fighters who are currently in the field.

Still another unforeseen strain on the force is the tension between active duty and reserves (including the National Guard) in the ground forces, especially in the Army. In the 1970s, the pressure to build an all-volunteer military, combined with the need to reduce defense expenditures following the Vietnam War and the simultaneous growth of the Soviet threat, led the Army to make an important trade-off. It placed many essential but non-combat functions in reserve units in order to keep the maximum possible combat power in the active force. The problem with this approach became apparent in the 1990s, when even the small but protracted deployment of American forces in Bosnia and then Kosovo strained critical support units in the active army and required the mobilization of reservists. To be clear: The deployment of something like 30,000 troops out of an army of 495,000 required reserve mobilizations. That should have woken some people up, but in the "era of constrained defense resources" that was the 1990s, waking up was not an option. The deployment of 180,000 soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan has naturally made the "strain" of the 1990s look relaxed.

The decision to shift functions to National Guard support units affected those units, but the large-scale deployments after 2003 affected even the Guard's combat units. The current demand for troops has made it necessary to employ National Guard units in extended tours. The National Guard has a long and distinguished lineage, but it has never been used this way before. Lyndon Johnson found it easier to rely on conscription than to commit Guard combat brigades to Vietnam. During Desert Storm, acrimony arose when senior Army leaders refused to deploy Guard units to the desert on the grounds that they were not combat-ready, and some Guard leaders felt they had been slighted. By the end of the 1990s, Guard units were in the Balkans, and they have kept a sustained presence there, in Afghanistan, and in Iraq ever since.

The problem is that the Guard was not meant to be mobilized and deployed abroad on repeated tours in extended wars. It was meant to be the nation's strategic reserve—the force that was committed in extremis when a mission exceeded the capability of the active force and before (or in place of) national mobilization. The heavy use of Guard and reserve units in prolonged tours has led some to complain that the nation has broken its compact with those units—that they are being treated like active units when they never signed up to be. This is another legacy of the Cold War. As we have seen, prolonged conflicts were not part of that era's doctrine. It is worth noting, finally, that signs of strain have begun to develop even between the Army and the Marines. Since April 2007, Army units have been deployed to Iraq for 15-month tours, while Marine units deploy for only 7 months. The reason is that the USMC wants to keep its troop deployments aligned with ship rotations, and those occur semi-annually. The result is that soldiers spend more than twice as long on the ground at a stretch. Recent comments by Marine Corps commandant James Conway that the Marines would prefer to move out of Iraq entirely and focus on Afghanistan generated additional controversy.

OFFICERS VS. OFFICERS

The most subtle and heart-wrenching strains on the military are those developing within the officer corps itself. To the outside (and even to some on the inside) these strains appear to be the result of two rival cliques: a Casey-Abizaid group that defends the approach those commanders took in the Iraq War, and a Petraeus-Odierno group that embraces the "surge" strategy of 2007. There is some truth to this appearance. Senior commanders often inspire enthusiasts and protégés among subordinates, and jealousies among equals. The controversy surrounding the January 2007 strategy shift has added to this phenomenon, which would not be remarkable in itself.

But there is more to it than that. Officers who command units in combat face a unique kind of stress. They worry, as anyone would, about the dangers they face, but they worry much more about the dangers their subordinates face. Commanders feel tremendous responsibility to the soldiers they lead, and they take the injuries and deaths of those soldiers very hard indeed. No army in the world has ever cherished its enlisted soldiers as much as this one, and for good reason, for no army has ever had soldiers of such high quality, all volunteers. And of all the losses a commander has to watch his soldiers suffer, none is more painful than a casualty that was

KIANNE SADEQ/AP

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avoidable. Commanders understand that people are injured and die in war, even those entrusted to them. But they normally find intolerable the notion that their soldiers have died because of their mistakes.

From 2004 through 2006, but especially toward the end of that period, there was a general sense that we were not winning in Iraq. The fault, if any, was not that of the soldiers, who fought skillfully, professionally, and bravely. Nor was it that of their mid-level commanders, who led their units well, followed the orders they were given, made only the normal and expectable number of mistakes, and learned from them relatively quickly. Even so, the experience of losing soldiers in what seemed to be a losing cause led some to feel guilty, as though they themselves were to blame. Others simply became bitter that their superiors, either civilian or military, had sent their soldiers to die on a fool's errand. Even commanders who managed to achieve local or regional successes generally emerged frustrated that headquarters seemed unwilling or unable to support and capitalize on their gains.

The tide began to turn in 2007. The start of large-scale Corps offensives in June, together with the rise of tribal movements against al-Qaeda, wrong-footed the terrorists and allowed U.S. forces to oversee dramatic and unexpected improvements in security. Many commanders started to feel not only that they were succeeding, but that they were part of an effort that was succeeding overall. Their comrades who left before the turnaround have responded variously, but some have clearly reacted with bitterness, at first denying the possibility of success and then falling into quiet hostility. The first units to experience this sense of success are just now returning home. It remains to be seen how they will interact with their fellows.

Today Iraq gets all the headlines, but the problems the U.S. military faces are bigger than any single conflict. If U.S. troops left Iraq tomorrow, the military would still be wrongly structured for any kind of war it is likely to face. The fault lines in that structure would still generate inappropriate and dangerous tensions; success would still require superhuman efforts on the part of individual senior leaders to transcend their legally defined roles and think only about the welfare of the nation as a whole. Some would do so; most would not. The system would continue to creak and groan and tear under the pressure of unbalanced strains it was never designed to bear.

Iraq is a symptom of this disease, not the cause. Similar tensions occurred over Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, each with different people in the key positions. This is not a problem of personality dysfunction, and it is not a problem of ideology, although both have played important roles in recent failures. It is a problem of structure, of organization, and, more fundamentally, of the conception of what kinds of war we are likely to have to fight and how we will fight them.

Of all the scary war scenarios facing the U.S. over the coming decades, the one for which our military is currently structured—simultaneous attacks on all fronts, in all dimensions, by a unitary global enemy—is the least likely. A grinding, prolonged, land-forces-based struggle within one regional command, or possibly two, is the most likely. Debate over the wisdom of the Iraq War and our current approach to it has obscured this reality for too long. Two decades after the fall of the Soviet Union, it is time to adjust our military for the post–Cold War world. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY**

Against The Cartel

How to reform higher education

JOHN HOOD

Consider two fast-growing sectors of the U.S. economy that are in the political spotlight this year: health care and higher education. Both employ highly paid professionals and mix government and private money and institutions. Both are plagued by the inevitable consequences of third-party payment, such as wasteful consumption, burgeoning costs, and price inflation.

But there's a big difference. On health care, John McCain distinguishes himself from Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton by offering a market-oriented agenda. On higher education, the candidates sound all too similar: All three express concerns that the current financial crunch will limit student access to subsidized loans. All three support more federal aid, on the promise that it will boost the U.S. economy. And all three are wrong.

It's important for conservative politicians and activists to think clearly, consistently, and creatively about higher education, an issue with important consequences for the nation's economy and culture. It's good politics, too: Polls show that concerns about college costs and access to retraining in a turbulent economy rank high among swing voters—not quite as high as health care, but high enough.

In a perfect world, Washington would have little to do with higher education. It wouldn't subsidize student loans, fiddle with academic standards, or hand out billions of dollars to university "research" programs that, particularly in the social sciences and humanities, do little but restate the obvious and recycle the devious. The Constitution does not give Congress any of these powers.

But that corpulent genie won't fit back in the bottle anytime soon. And I use the phrase "little to do with higher education" rather than "nothing to do with higher education" because the federal government does have a proper, constitutional, and likely indispensable role in funding some of the hard sciences, which often have national-security applications. Conservatives need to push the government's education policy in the right direction, rather than try to eliminate it altogether.

The trick is finding the right direction. Earlier this year, Sol Stern started a brouhaha in the Manhattan Institute's *City Journal* over the question whether education reformers should

Mr. Hood is chairman and president of the John Locke Foundation, a North Carolina–based think tank, and serves on the board of the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy.

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emphasize choice and markets or standards and curriculum. He argued that the former had failed to show adequate results. Conservatives and free-marketeers across the country chimed in, some agreeing and some not.

To those who promote reform of American *higher* education, the debate sounded familiar. And the answer is clear: There's no reason to choose sides. Reform is impossible without pursuing both lines of attack. To decry the academy's poor instruction, political correctness, and leftward tilt without promoting competition is to spit against a tornado. At the same time, to criticize the government's domination of the field without advancing an alternative vision generates little public interest or pressure on state and federal policymakers.

But while some policies could improve education at all levels, there is an important difference between K–12 and higher-ed reform: K–12 reformers can answer the question, What's the problem? There is general agreement that American high schools graduate too few students, and graduate students who know too little. Disagreements arise only about who's to blame and how to fix it.

With higher education, the matter is muddled. American colleges and universities are often described as the best in the world, and the voting public seems most concerned with the rising price of getting into them, not what's going on inside. A powerful lobby—spanning the spectrum from public-employee unions to business groups, and employing tens of thousands of people in Washington and the state capitals—argues constantly, and usually successfully, that spending more tax money on higher education pays off handsomely.

HIDDEN COSTS

In all likelihood, their claim is an overstatement. Yes, college graduates earn more than non-graduates, but there are two important caveats. One, those who graduate college are on average smarter and more diligent than non-graduates, and their higher income might be due to those factors rather than to their having attended college. Two, even if college will raise the incomes of those already attending (it certainly will for some), it does not follow that enrolling more students—those who are not motivated or not qualified enough to attend under the current system—will also increase *their* incomes. Therefore, the new students, tax revenues, and contributions flooding into campuses might dilute, rather than boost, the value of higher education.

No one disputes that a four-year degree is a ticket to lucrative professions requiring advanced academic training, such as medicine, law, or academia itself. But most undergraduates are not training for these professions, and, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data, more and more college graduates go into jobs that do not require diplomas. George Leef, vice president for research of the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy, notes that a quarter of travel agents and retail-sales supervisors, a third of flight attendants, and nearly half of aerobics instructors have bachelor's degrees. That's fine—if they wanted to study Goethe or geology for personal edification, and were willing to spend four years and a lot of money doing so. But it's pointless if the idea was to boost their careers.

Using 2000 data on test scores and coursework, education researchers Jay Greene of the University of Arkansas and Greg Forster of the Friedman Foundation estimated that the number of high-school students prepared to study college-level material was about 40,000 lower than the number of students enrolling in college. The predictable result of this trend is that only a minority of American colleges and universities are truly selective anymore, with gut courses and grade inflation rampant on many campuses.

In a normal market, prices would take care of this: The high cost of education would discourage those who wouldn't sufficiently profit from a diploma. But as with health care, third-party payment hides the actual price. About three-quarters of all college students attend public universities, where taxpayers shoulder a large percentage, often the majority, of the cost. Furthermore, government grants and subsidized loans significantly defray the tuition and fees at both public and private schools. Most families pay only a small fraction of the true cost of undergraduate education.

This makes college seem cheaper than it is, and, in consequence, many students attend who shouldn't. With demand up, colleges have an incentive to raise tuition and fees: They get a lot more money without losing many students.

This sets off a vicious cycle. The tuition hikes make voters call for more subsidies, which make college seem cheaper again. Colleges raise tuition (again) and pocket the subsidies. In the end, relatively few students benefit—some go to college who wouldn't have gone otherwise, but they tend to drop out at high rates. The only consistent beneficiaries are higher-education institutions.

And make no mistake: Higher education is a huge, lucrative industry. You can't get its measure by looking at the average pay for English professors or tracking expenditures at student stores. American universities have become business conglomerates

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with preferential tax treatment and diverse interests in recreational services, business incubation, health care, contract research, broadcasting, real estate, and semi-professional sports. In 2004–05, expenditures on research, hospitals, auxiliary services, and other non-instructional operations made up about one-third of university budgets, and even this statistic understates the research budget—it leaves out the full cost of the physical plant and the salaries of many highly paid professors who, while classified as instructors, spend little time in the classroom.

But, some policymakers ask, if American universities have become major business enterprises, doesn't it make sense to invest additional public resources in them, to encourage economic growth? In a word, no. Careful studies by Ohio University's Richard Vedder, the Goldwater Institute in Arizona, and my colleagues at the John Locke Foundation, among others, find no statistically significant relationship between state spending on higher education and state economic growth. Bigger-spending states may shift economic activity toward communities with major state universities, but that's not the same as boosting the economy overall.

Flawed higher-education policies cost taxpayers billions of dollars a year. But dollars aren't the only measure of their toll. By weakening the connection between colleges and their consumers, subsidies enable much of the propaganda, political theater, and pseudo-intellectual twaddle that pervade American higher education today. Private dollars tend to flow to the hard sciences, business programs, and other disciplines where practicalities militate against political bias. Public dollars become handy resources to finance academic preening and political activism.

The good news is that the Left's attempt to indoctrinate college students is frequently ineffective. The bad news is that it often fails simply because students aren't paying attention to—or learning—much of anything. Last year the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) conducted a revealing survey of undergraduate knowledge about American history and civics. Testing some 14,000 students at 50 major campuses, it found that the average senior correctly answered only 54 percent of the questions, and that there was very little gain in knowledge over the four years. Indeed, at such prestigious universities as Cornell and Yale, the seniors actually scored lower than the freshmen did.

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I'm not saying that, if not for excessive government involvement in higher education, campuses would be hotbeds of traditional values and free-market economics. But government did help facilitate the rise of the mass-market university in the 1950s and '60s, a development that created lots of new jobs for the proverbial tenured radicals—and changed the way large numbers of American youths entered adulthood, by reducing the steadying influence of their families and communities. As late as the early 1950s, about half of university students attended private schools, with many of these institutions still honoring their religious affiliations and traditions. By 1965, with college attendance surging, government universities were enrolling two-thirds of students, and by 1995 the share had risen to nearly 80 percent. There has been a modest uptick in private-college enrollment since then, to 26 percent in 2005.

A LONG-TERM AGENDA

As with K–12 education and health care, reform of American higher education will take patience, persistence, careful attention to legislative detail, and a willingness to start small. Here are five elements of a coherent strategy for reform.

1. Whenever possible, end loan subsidies and direct grants to universities, replacing them with student grants and tax credits.

State and federal subsidy programs have proliferated in number, type, and eligibility guidelines. It's confusing: Federal programs include Pell grants, work-study assistance, means-tested loans, the massive Federal Family Education Loan Program (which insures loans issued by private financial institutions), and the federal Direct Loan Program. Either students or their parents can take out federal loans. On top of all that, Americans claim billions of dollars a year in tax credits and deductions for college expenses.

According to Neal McCluskey of the Cato Institute, federal aid now totals nearly $90 billion, up from $50 billion a decade ago. As large as this number is, it's exceeded by the annual expenditure of state and local governments on direct appropriations to universities, scholarship assistance, and state and local tax breaks (including exemptions of campus real estate from property taxes and university purchases from sales taxes).

To rationalize these subsidy programs, we must begin by reducing their number and complexity. A good place to start would be getting government out of the business of guaranteeing and subsidizing student borrowing. Democrats in Congress have been justifiably outraged at recent abuses of the federal loan programs, fostered by cozy relationships between unscrupulous lenders and corrupt bureaucrats. But the Democratic proposal to expand direct federal lending isn't the right way to go, either.

In polls, most respondents say they prefer grants to loans as a form of aid. We should take them up on the offer, by phasing out subsidized loans, giving out larger Pell grants for the disadvantaged, and greatly expanding tax breaks for everyone else. The

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best mechanism would be to enact generous tax deductions or credits for deposits into the tax-free educational savings accounts (including Coverdell Accounts and Section 529 plans) that millions of American families have already set up for their children.

Essentially, educational savings accounts should become more like health savings accounts, with tax breaks on the front end, tax-free withdrawals for educational expenses, and taxable but penalty-free withdrawals for other purposes. If colleges tried to hike tuition and pocket the subsidy, as they currently do, they wouldn't be as successful, since students could shop for a better deal and spend the balance on something else.

At the state level, conservative lawmakers should limit growth in public-university funding, allow tuition payments to cover more of the cost, and create their own tax credits for deposits to educational savings accounts. Sound impossible? This is already more or less the trend in many states, with tuition rising, and direct appropriation falling, as a share of university revenues. We should offer university leaders more autonomy in exchange for relying less on taxpayers. This won't be easy, but as long as American higher education gets its money from legislative decisions rather than consumer choices, there is little prospect of restructuring it.

2. Promote competition in higher education.

School-choice activists are correct to celebrate the fact that, in American higher (but not K–12) education, grant and loan dollars may be spent on private as well as public institutions. That creates some healthy competitive pressures on public campuses, particularly in states that offer scholarship assistance to students choosing private schools—the higher-education equivalent of vouchers. But the subsidy is much greater for public universities, and it favors four-year schools over two-year community colleges.

Many students on university campuses are manifestly not prepared for a rigorous education in the liberal arts or sciences—one reason that five- and even six-year graduation rates typically fall below 60 percent. Some of these students would be better off staying closer to home and enrolling in training or degree programs at community colleges. But the average annual subsidy at two-year colleges is far smaller than at four-year colleges. Fixed-dollar tax credits or scholarships would help reduce this disparity, as would increased state spending on community colleges relative to elite universities.

One of the success stories of the past decade has been the rise of new for-profit colleges and universities, many using distance-learning technologies. Two of the five largest universities in the U.S. are for-profits: the University of Phoenix and Western International University. The for-profits, now educating some 1.3 million Americans a year, are the only reason that enrollment in private post-secondary institutions has recovered a bit in recent years (*nonprofit* private colleges and universities have continued to trail public universities in enrollment growth). Policymakers can encourage additional innovation and experimentation by liberalizing occupational-licensing laws (or, preferably, axing them—but crawl before you walk) and reforming accreditation. These policies would draw even more entrepreneurs into the market for post-secondary education and job training. The academic establishment will fight such measures tooth and nail. Cartels do that.

3. Carve out centers of educational excellence and serious scholarship.

Most wealthy alumni of America's elite institutions and public-university systems are, to be blunt, part of the problem. Many, including conservatives who ought to know better, reflexively give their hard-earned cash—no strings attached—to their alma maters because of nostalgia, ego, or a desire for good seats at sporting events (one of academia's most potent lobbying and marketing tools). Instead, donors should make major gifts only with restrictions, and be willing to look far afield for universities amenable to new ideas.

Donors can fund chairs in free enterprise, law and economics, classical-liberal political philosophy, or applied science. They can finance scholarship programs and teaching awards to promote educational excellence. Better yet, they can seek to emulate promising endeavors such as Princeton's James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions and Duke's Gerst Program in Political, Economic, and Humanistic Studies, which work with committed faculty and open-minded deans to promote the study of the great ideas of Western civilization.

It's another way to promote reform through market competition—such programs are proving to be popular with students and alumni. And it keeps scarce resources away from the nincompoops who have trivialized the academy.

4. Use courts of law and public opinion to defend and expand true academic freedom.

While pursuing broader reforms, it's important to continue guerrilla actions against university speech codes, biased student funding, professorial incompetence, and other abuses. These are the stock in trade of such organizations as the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) and David Horowitz's Freedom Center. Every lawsuit they win and outrageous university action they skewer advances the cause, by keeping high-handed administrators and professors under the uncomfortable glare of public scrutiny.

5. Support a broad-based, national movement for higher-education reform.

ISI, the Institute for Humane Studies, and the Fund for American Studies have long worked to identify promising students, arm them with information and opportunities for supplemental or graduate study, and assist conservative and libertarian organizations on campus. The National Association of Scholars has given voice to reform-minded faculty members, while the American Council of Trustees and Alumni has sought to promote reform by educating those who finance universities and serve on their governing boards. The Pope Center and several state and national think tanks are conducting valuable research on many of these issues.

The cause of reform has many champions. But it needs many more. The higher-education lobby is large, powerful, and well-financed. It won't be easy to combat. But if conservatives won't do it, no one will. **NR**

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FLORENCE KING

Dull Gray Euphemism

Hi! I'm an Old White Woman. What are you?

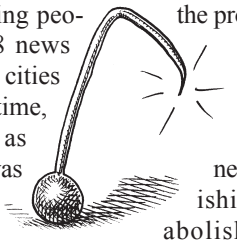
If you don't know your category you weren't paying attention when the talking heads were analyzing the results of the West Virginia primary and handing out categories left and right, especially right. It seems that the masses behaved badly—i.e., they voted overwhelmingly for Hillary—and had to be scorned and shamed into submission lest their bad behavior spread to other primaries and influence the Democratic nomination. To explain away the lopsided vote, the Obamaniacs turned it into a giant faux pas and came up with a scarlet letter or a mark of McCain to suit every lapse of taste.

Statisticians never had it so good. The pundits did a Beer vs. Chablis chart, a Bowlers vs. Golfers chart, and speculated on everything from Snowmobiles vs. Skiing to Spam vs. Prosciutto. They were noticeably gleeful and self-satisfied by Obama's predicted victory in College Graduates vs. Poorly Educated. That there might be one or two other scholastic categories between these two extremes was ignored in the interests of portraying Hillary as the belle of the losers' ball.

I already knew I was old, white, and female but being an Old White Woman is something else. In a way it's a step up—I never expected to make Trinity—but out of the mouths of pundits it is decidedly a step down. Somehow they manage to make the phrase sound poor; threadbare, out-at-elbows, bag-lady poor. Stately dowagers are old white women too, but the Old White Woman of the pollsters is the mother of those beer-drinking bowlers, the convict's mother in "Mama Tried," and the trailer-park grievance collector who is old enough to remember when merely being white was all the bona fides you needed.

All in all, the subliminal message read: If you don't complain that your soup is cold when you are served vichyssoise, we will let you live. Otherwise we will mock you and scorn you and run you down until you are so full of self-loathing that you will vote for whomever we tell you to.

This really is an election about change because the word "class," avoided for as long as I can remember, has made a sudden and powerful comeback. In 1974 I used "workingclass" in a *Harper's* article and they changed it to "working people." Now the Campaign '08 news desks routinely identify whole cities as "workingclass." For a long time, "socio-economic status" was as close as we would venture. It was okay to talk about middle-class morality but not middle-class *class*—"suburban" was the preferred euphemism.



Until recently we had a class called the "working poor," something like the Victorians' "deserving poor," but as more and more workers grew more and more poor, it stopped making sense. The same thing is happening to "rural." It used to mean being poor and white in the country as opposed to poor and black in the city, until our love affair with small towns and dreams of exurbia transformed "rural" into a status word with landed-gentry overtones. But then the housing meltdown struck and nobody could afford to move anywhere, so our class-barometer needle got stuck on Squire Redneck, Master of the Hound Dogs, which political junkies probably call "in transition."

Having already called a spade a spade by saying "workingclass," there is now little point in saying "blue-collar," so that longstanding euphemism will fade away. Not that it was much of a euphemism, but at least it avoided the word "class," as does "Reagan Democrat." The only sacrosanct euphemism left is the wordiest dodge we have ever adopted: "Jobs that Americans won't do." It's a tactful way of saying we need a servant class.

Life in so-called classless societies is a dull gray business, but life in a class-based society can be fun as long as we don't let the media use it against us. People who accept class differences are spontaneous, and spontaneous people, unlike politically correct people, say entertaining things. The other day on the bus, the two women behind me were discussing Cindy McCain. Said one: "She owns the beer that Hillary drinks."

Unfortunately, American society is not class-based, merely snobbish to a schizoid degree. On one hand are the Ivy Leagued, six-figured lords and ladies of the media sneering at the proles, while on the other hand are the Ivy Leagued, six-figured candidates dropping their g's and slurring their diction to sound like the proles the media sneer at.

George Orwell, every conservative's favorite socialist, believed that the English class system guarded against our nemesis, the identity crisis. Abolishing class distinctions meant abolishing a part of oneself, he said, because everything about him, from his definition of humor to the way he ate his soup, was a result of class distinctions. "When I grasp this," he wrote, "I grasp that it is no use clapping a proletarian on the back and telling him that he is as good a man as I am; if I want real contact with him . . . I have got to alter myself so completely that at the end I should hardly be recognisable as the same person."

The middle-class Orwell was writing in the '30s when the English middle class was hanging on by its fingernails, much as our own middle class is now. His advice to his contemporaries could well be the ideal solution for people caught in our current mortgage and credit meltdowns. And it is positively splendid advice for slumming politicians, especially those who boast that they were the first member of their family to go to college.

Perhaps, says Orwell, the entire middle class, himself included, should "sink without further struggles into the workingclass where we belong, and probably when we get there it will not be so dreadful as we feared, for, after all, we have nothing to lose but our aitches." **NR**

Florence King can be reached at P.O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, VA 22404.

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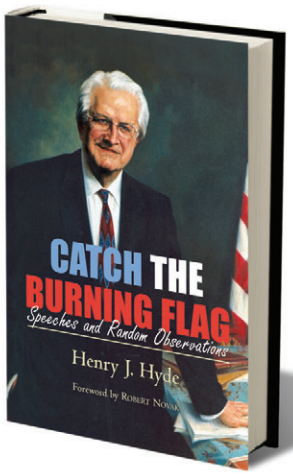

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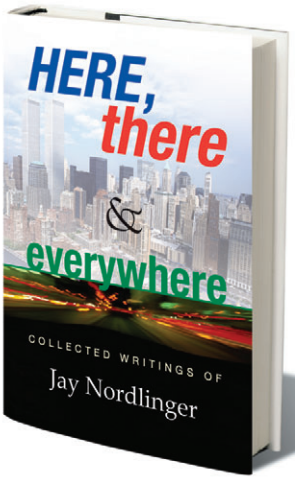

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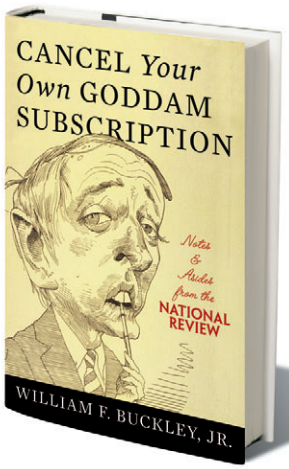

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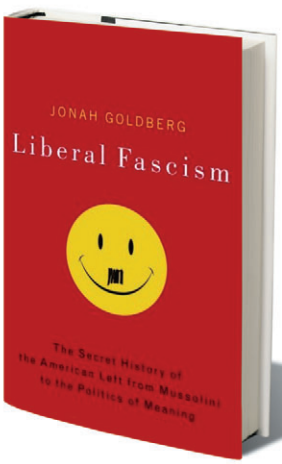

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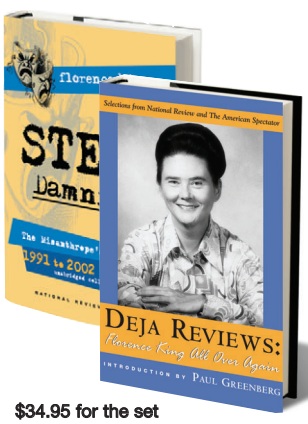
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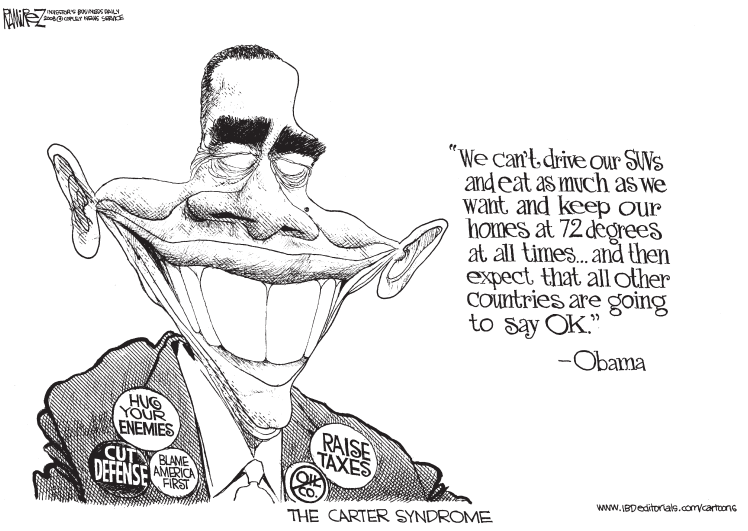
"Sure, I'm a mass murderer—but I don't want to be defined by that!"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–Obama
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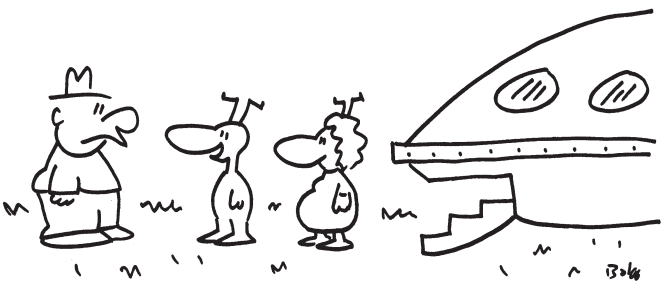

"Is it true that California hospitals treat illegal aliens for free?"

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the long view

ROB LONG

Wilson & Sterling, Attorneys at Law

IN RE: CLINTON/CLINTON CONTINUATION OF MARRIAGE AGREEMENT 2000, AND ADDENDA

Dear Steve:

Many thanks for your phone call yesterday. I have received your e-mail of this morning and discussed it briefly with my client.

While she is mindful of the continuing debt incurred by her primary campaign, she is also adamant that the $11 million (give or take $2 million) represents a shared commitment between her and your client. They file jointly, as I'm sure I don't need to remind you, so any attempt by your client to suggest that this is "her" debt and "her problem" is naturally unacceptable to us.

Indeed, your assertion during our phone conversation that your client has discharged his responsibilities to my client, *vis-à-vis* the above-referenced agreement, is indefensible on its face. That agreement—*ref* Clinton/Clinton Continuation of Marriage Agreement 2000, Section 1934,880; chaps. X–XL, page 43,866—clearly lists the ways in which your client must continue to support and aid my client in direct compensation for her past support and aid—*ref* Clinton/Clinton Continuation of Marriage Agreement 1997, Section 299.09; chap. *Lewinsky et al*.

I must tell you at the outset that my client is not inclined to accept your definition of "help" and/or "counsel" with regard to her continuing campaign for the presidential nomination of the Democratic party. Your client, Bill Clinton (hereinafter "husband" and/or "spouse"), has repeatedly made unhelpful and unwelcome public remarks during the course of the campaign—as I know you're aware—and your client's assertion that the recent "gaffes" committed by my client (for example, referencing specifically the tragic assassination of New York senator Robert F. Kennedy) are on par with these is immaterial.

Our agreement of 13 December 2004 (*ref* Clinton/Clinton Continuation of Marriage Agreement, Appendix XLIX, page 8642, paragraphs i–iii) clearly enumerates the ways in which your client is to comport himself for the duration of the primary and (pending) general campaign, and during any subsequent Hillary Clinton presidential administration. We spent many careful hours working these issues out, to allow our respective clients the ability to continue their loving marriage with a degree of certainty and understanding.

I trust you'll agree that your client has been in serious breach of that agreement since the morning of the South Carolina primary. Your offer to "take the $11 million off the table and call it a day" is unacceptable to my client.

I look forward to your response at the earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Greg
(DICTATED BUT NOT READ)

Wilmer, Patton

IN RE: CLINTON/CLINTON CONTINUATION OF MARRIAGE AGREEMENT 2000, AND ADDENDA

Dear Greg:

Many thanks for your timely response to my letter of 5/23.

I appreciate the thoroughness of your reply. Yet I must still, on behalf of my client, remind you that while they are "married" in the legal and, of course, deeply loving sense, and while the $11 million campaign debt is shared, naturally, by them—as it would be by any normal, happily married couple—it would be unfair and in fact unjust to suggest that it was anything other than my client's hard work consulting for the Emirate of Dubai, and his efforts with private investor Ron Burkle, that created the financial situation for such a campaign loan to be feasible at all.

As I know you're aware, the total net worth of the Clintons in 2000 was, roughly, $27,000, half of which was earmarked for the creation and negotiation of the contractual documents you referenced in your letter of 5/23. That it stands, today, at well in excess of $50 million is a testament to my client's tireless work schedule.

May I suggest a compromise? It is entirely likely that the Obama '08 campaign will offer your client the opportunity to retire the debt in exchange for dropping out of the race. If your client could see her way toward making that happen, my client, I'm sure, would be more amenable to maintaining a more vigilant adherence to the Basic Agreement, with special regard for Section XCXVI, *Social Activities Allowed and Disallowed*.

This, I'm sure, would have a positive effect on your client's chances to run again in 2012, or perhaps in 2008 as a vice-presidential candidate, should that be her desire.

As always, my client remains a steadfast supporter and admirer of your client, his wife. And he would like nothing better than to be helpful, in recognition of her many contributions to his success.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Steve
(DICTATED BUT NOT READ)

THE LAW OFFICES OF *Michelle Obama*

IN RE: LETTER DATED 27 MAY 2008

Dear Greg:

Many thanks for your letter of 27 May.

I'm pleased to say that your client's offer to step down from the primary campaign in exchange for assistance and fundraising support to retire her campaign debt is one that we regard as essentially productive and helpful.

The second part of your offer, for your client to join the ticket as a vice-presidential candidate, is more problematic. Your client, as I'm sure you're aware, does not come without encumbrances. We would need a great deal of assurance about some of these (her husband's financial, foreign, and social activities; her staff requirements; etc.), and of course we would need to put all of it in writing.

In addition, any financial help at all in regard to the $11 million campaign debt would be predicated on your client's husband's agreement in writing to such an understanding.

Thanks again for your interest in resolving this matter. I'm hopeful that the three parties can reach a speedy conclusion.

Sincerely,
Michelle Obama

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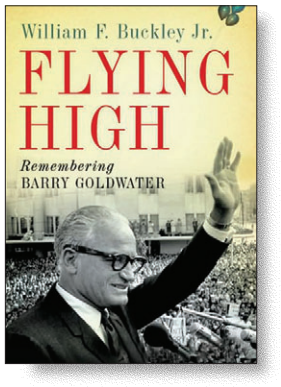
Happy Days



Flying High: Remembering Barry Goldwater, by William F. Buckley Jr. (Basic, 208 pp., $25.95)

LEE EDWARDS

WHAT do Bill Buckley, Barry Goldwater, and Russell Kirk—the three giants of American conservatism—conspire about at a secret 1962 meeting in Florida? How to decouple the ultra-right-wing Robert Welch and his John Birch Society from the conservative movement and from Senator Goldwater, who is then warily considering a run for the presidency.

What critical task is Goldwater operative Richard Kleindienst given in the middle of the 1964 New Hampshire Republican primary? To get Doloris Bridges, the outspoken widow of Sen. Styles Bridges, to stop campaigning for Goldwater and reminding people that Barry once said he'd like to lob a bomb into the men's room of the Kremlin. There's only one way, New Hampshire campaign chairman Sen. Norris Cotton remarks, placing a bottle of Old Crow before the virile young Kleindienst: Make love to Doloris.

How do Goldwater and Buckley pass the time on a visit to the South Pole where the temperature hovers at 56 degrees below zero? Consuming "great trays of caviar and tumblers of vodka" in a Soviet igloo—actually Goldwater was temporarily on the wagon; placing a surprise radio call to Pat Buckley, who remarks grumpily, "Do you realize what time it is? It's three o'clock in the morning!"; and carefully preserving a 25,000-year-old block of ice proffered by a friendly Soviet scientist.

These playful recollections—and others more serious—are to be found in *Flying High*, Bill Buckley's latest book. I say "latest" because it has been authoritatively reported that Buckley was working on a similar memoir of Ronald Reagan when he died earlier this year. *Flying High* is a slender but illuminating volume about Buckley's decades-long friendship and political alliance with the Arizona senator known as "Mr. Conservative."

There are scenes of Goldwater in a walking cast limping through the New Hampshire snows en route to the 1964 Republican presidential nomination, and Goldwater confounding everyone at the Republican National Convention, including his own staff, with what Buckley calls the "most notorious rhetorical couplet in modern political history": "I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you also that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue." General Eisenhower, still the most influential Republican in America, was so shaken by the widespread protests against the words that he summoned Goldwater to his hotel suite for an explanation. Goldwater ended a tense and often testy conversation by pointing out that the troops Eisenhower had led across the Channel in 1944 could only be described as having taken an "extremist position on how to defeat Hitler"—satisfying a suddenly smiling Ike.

There is an insider's account of how Goldwater and Brent Bozell, Buckley's brother-in-law and a senior editor of NATIONAL REVIEW, collaborated closely not only on *The Conscience of a Conservative*—the most consequential manifesto in American politics since Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*—but *Why Not Victory?* Buckley describes the latter as "the most distinctive essay ever written for public consumption on the nature of the Communist threat, and on the corresponding responsibilities of U.S. policy." Its central argument—that America must undertake a strategy of victory in the Cold War—was adopted and implemented by Ronald Reagan.

One chapter that will be studied carefully by historians deals with a meeting in the summer of 1963 in which Buckley and Bozell conferred with William Baroody, the suave president of the American Enterprise Institute and Goldwater's closest academic counselor; Denison Kitchel, the presumptive chairman of the Goldwater campaign; and Jay Gordon Hall, a General Motors lobbyist with a Ph.D. in history who had long advised the senator on labor and other issues.

Flying High is a slender but illuminating volume about Buckley's decades-long friendship and political alliance with the Arizona senator known as 'Mr. Conservative.'

Bozell had conceived the idea of a committee of prominent scholars who would publicly identify themselves with Goldwater as "the principal political spokesman" of the conservative cause. Buckley phoned down to Washington for an appointment with the senator to discuss the proposal, but what he got was not Goldwater but a meeting with Baroody, Kitchel, and Hall in Hall's elegant Hay-Adams Hotel suite.

The ensuing discussion was an exercise in obfuscation with B & B pointing out that the suggested committee of intellectuals would bolster Goldwater's standing as a leader, and B, K & H agreeing but suggesting no concrete action to implement the idea. Financing should not prove a problem, B & B confidently predicted, adding that Bozell was immediately available to organize the committee. Again there was no response. "And so," Buckley writes, "we left Washington for the air shuttle with some bewilderment."

Mr. Edwards is a Distinguished Fellow at the Heritage Foundation and the author of biographies of Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, and Edwin Meese III.

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All was made clear the following week when the *New York Times* published a headline that read, "Goldwater Aides Counter Right / Rebuff Overture by Buckley, Ultra-Conservative Editor." The accompanying article stated, "The Goldwater-for-President ship has just repelled a boarding party from the forces who occupy the supposedly narrow territory to the right of the Arizona Senator."

It was obvious that Baroody, who had both ears of the candidate and was unwilling to share them with anyone else, had leaked the story to the *Times*. Buckley, Bozell, William Rusher, James Burnham, Frank Meyer, and other members of the good ship NATIONAL REVIEW were blocked from making any significant contribution to the Goldwater campaign.

The disassociation, Buckley makes clear, "did not affect the magazine's enthusiastic endorsement of Goldwater's candidacy" or its policy suggestions—including the carefully crafted "A Program for a Goldwater Administration," inspired by *The Conscience of a Conservative*. Among NR's recommendations were the application of the principle of voluntarism in future extensions of Social Security and a shift from the defeatist foreign policy of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations to a more dynamic policy on national defense and the worldwide anti-Communist effort.

Years later, Goldwater publicly admitted that Buckley, Bozell, and other NR conservatives should have been able to talk to him and others in his campaign about issues, strategy, the media, and other matters. One is tempted to speculate what kind of acceptance speech Bozell might have written for the senator or how Buckley might have improved the committee of scholars Baroody finally formed. However, regardless of their involvement, Goldwater would have been soundly defeated. As Buckley remarked, "The Archangel Gabriel running on the Republican ticket probably could not [have won]."

Buckley concedes that his book "is not strictly factual" in all respects—the sometime novelist cannot resist inserting a fictional character here and there to make a point—and not all conversations can be documented as "having taken place word for word." But Buckley insists there are "zero distortions" and no alterations of an individual's character or habit of speech. I can personally attest, having served in that valiant enterprise, that the scenes about the 1964 presidential campaign—such as the internal debate over whether to broadcast Reagan's extraordinary television address "A Time for Choosing"—are accurate.

A few things, however, require clarification. Nelson Rockefeller did not campaign even "half-heartedly" for Goldwater. New York young conservatives, upset at the failure of Goldwater headquarters to provide them with campaign materials, discovered the materials had been waylaid by Rockefeller people and secreted in a Manhattan warehouse. The "extremism" couplet in Goldwater's acceptance address was not "suggested" by Harry Jaffa, then a professor of political science at Ohio State, but written by Jaffa, who in fact drafted the entire speech. President Lyndon B. Johnson was not "re"-nominated at the 1964 Democratic National Convention, but nominated for the first time, as he had ascended to the presidency through the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Buckley acknowledges he did not intend to write a book about Barry Goldwater, but once it was suggested to him he had "one of those buoyancies"—"Mr. Eiffel, why don't you build a tower?" How fortunate we and future generations are that Bill Buckley surrendered to the impulse and wrote this "very personal reminiscence"—affectionate and affecting—that does much to explain how these two happy warriors started out standing athwart history yelling "Stop!" but wound up igniting a political revolution that remade America. **NR**

One of Them

Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America, by Rick Perlstein (Scribner, 881 pp., $37.50)

MICHAEL KNOX BERAN

RICK PERLSTEIN is a writer of large gifts. Though the historical territory covered in his new book, *Nixonland*, is not unfamiliar, the result is nevertheless continuously interesting.

The book's thesis, however, is another matter. Perlstein finds in the stock picture of Richard Nixon—the man of "overwhelming angers, anxieties, and resentments"—a key to American politics since 1964. The "brilliant and tormented" loser forged "a public language that promised mastery of the strange new angers, anxieties, and resentments wracking the nation in the 1960s." Nixon saw that the "wave of the political future was an ambivalent reac-

Mr. Beran is a contributing editor of *City Journal*. His most recent book is *Forge of Empires 1861–1871: Three Revolutionary Statesmen and the World They Made*.

PROPOSAL

If you have thought of me as much as I
have thought of you, then we are not alone.
Exhausted as we are from feeling, prone
to those lapses from the mutual whereby
the heart is comforted, we typify
all novel loves—lie back, replace the phone
receiver, its pre-emptive dial tone
the prelude to an unforthcoming sigh.
I think of you as much as may be thought
before minds slip, and even tempers tilt—
with privileges of private disarray—
to one degree extremer than they ought;
before fair balance goes, good milk is spilt,
and each proposed idea becomes cliché.

—JENNIFER REESER

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Sun./Nov. 9	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
Mon./Nov. 10	Providenciales, Turks & Caicos	7:00 AM	3:00PM	afternoon seminar late-night smoker
Tue./Nov. 11	San Juan, Puerto Rico	10:00AM	11:00PM	
Wed./Nov. 12	St. Thomas, USVI	8:00AM	5:00PM	evening cocktail reception
Thu./Nov. 13	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars late-night smoker
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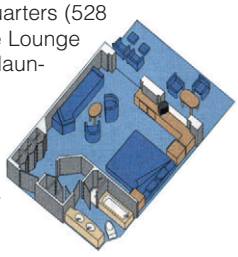

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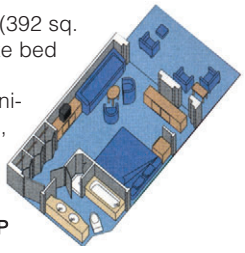

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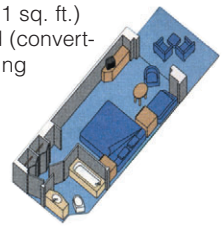

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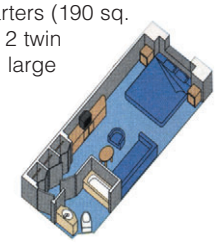

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insightful, or wittier social commentary than from the likes of **Mark Steyn**, **Christopher Buckley**, **Rob Long**, or **Deroy Murdock**? Toss media expert **Brent Bozell**, Arizona state policy maven **Darcy Olsen**, and Acton Institute chief **Fr. Robert Sirico** into the fray, and you have a sterling cast to review the ever-leftward tilt of the Fourth Estate and state government.

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tionary rage," and he created the macabre framework for a couple of generations' worth of Republican victories "by focusing people's resentments." "How did Nixonland end?" Perlstein asks. "It has not ended yet."

Barack Obama would likely agree. In April the senator expatiated, in San Francisco, on the resentments of small-town America. "And it's not surprising then," Obama said, "that they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations." They, in other words, live in Nixonland, where politicians use guns, religion, and racial revulsion to prevail at the polls.

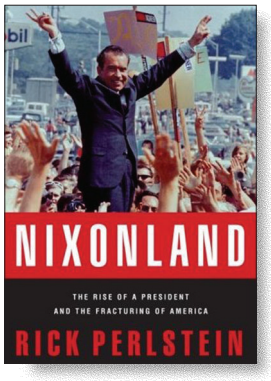
Nixonland went to press before Obama made his remarks, but the book is nonetheless a brief for the notion that politicians of the Right have darkened the landscape by appealing to Americans' basest instincts. In Perlstein's reading, Roger Ailes and Karl Rove (who make brief appearances in *Nixonland*) descend in apostolic succession from Nixon, the master of "stoking and exploiting anger and resentment."

Ronald Reagan himself becomes, in Perlstein's hands, an eminent Nixonian, "both a student and a teacher" of the dark prince. In reducing Reagan to anger-stoker—a somewhat more gifted Agnew—Perlstein challenges the thesis put forward by, among others, Steven F. Hayward, who argues that we inhabit, not Nixonland, but Reagan Country. In *The Age of Reagan* Hayward contends that Reagan overthrew the old liberal consensus; Perlstein, in *Nixonland*, gives the credit to Nixon.

Hayward has the stronger case. Take a look at what Nixon actually did when he was in power, and it's pretty clear that he was, not the first of the post–New Deal presidents, but the last of the liberal dinosaurs. Nixon had little sympathy for the idea of limited government that was at the heart of Reagan's message. His domestic proposals were faithful to the liberal ideal: a larger welfare state, a guaranteed minimum income, a high tariff, new regulatory agencies, more federal spending, wage and price controls. When spending pushed prices up, Nixon's answer was, "Kick the chain stores."

What he cared about, of course, was foreign policy. But though he thought himself an innovator, his geopolitical *Realpolitik* was itself faithful to the mood of old-guard liberals who, feeling the sting of Ho Chi Minh's lash, lost the epochal chutzpah that had produced the Truman Doctrine. In the early Seventies, Nixon's interpretation of history, like theirs, was elegiac and Nietzschean: America, he said, had become "subject to the decadence that destroys the civilization." His policy of détente with Brezhnev, like his *pas de deux* with Mao, was steeped in Spenglerian pessimism about the future of the West.

Nixon won the presidency not because he challenged the liberal consensus but because Democrats failed to keep order in the country at large and in their own house. While Johnson dithered, cities burned. Nixon did not offer consensus-shattering change in 1968; he ran on law and order. In 1972 the Democrats put on, in Miami, not a convention, but a psychedelic circus. Nixon won every state that fall except Massachusetts.



Perlstein is on stronger ground when he portrays Nixon as the first presidential contender to master the politics of the culture wars. But he fails in his attempt to link that mastery to the collapse of the liberal regime, for Nixon's own policies were slavishly true to the principles of Great Society statism. The liberal consensus collapsed, not with Nixon's victories in 1968 and 1972, but with the triumph of Reagan in 1980. The old order fell victim less to the rage and bitterness of the Silent Majority than to the realization, by Reagan Democrats, that liberalism wasn't working. The optimistic victor did not trade in bitterness: If some voters marked their ballots for Reagan in anger, many more did so in the not-unreasonable belief that he was right. Liberalism had failed to deliver.

To save his thesis, Perlstein patronizes Nixon's supporters, San Francisco–fund-raising style. Nixon's "paranoia and dread," he says, "were [the voters'] own." It was not surprising they got bitter: "Across the state of mind known as Middle America, a subterranean viciousness was bubbling ever closer to the surface." *Nixonland* overflows with narrow-minded Babbitts on whose miserable psyches Nixon unscrupulously preys. He launches his career by flattering the prejudices of "the upright burghers of Southern California." He goes on to amuse the yahoos with the "grand opera" of the Hiss Case and the maudlin sentimentality of the Checkers Speech. In the end he gives them, as president, new outlets "for their hatreds."

Like his portrait of the electorate, Perlstein's depiction of Nixon verges on the cartoonish. In dwelling on the kicked puppy in Nixon—the nerd who didn't make the Franklins (the cool fraternity at Whittier College)—Perlstein accepts at face value his antihero's contention that he was "one of us." This was the slogan of his *Ur*-campaign against Jerry Voorhis in 1946. Conrad, in *Lord Jim*, glossed the talismanic phrase. Jim, Marlow says, "was one of us. He stood there for all the parentage of his kind, for men and women by no means clever or amusing, but whose very existence is based upon honest faith, and upon the instinct of courage."

Though Nixon pretended that he was "one of us," the man who found his vade mecum in Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* was convinced that he was a superior man, a man of destiny—a tiger, albeit one in jackal's clothing. One of *them*. "I can't find my copy," he told Monica Crowley in 1992 when his Nietzsche went missing. "I must have lent it out to someone. I can't believe I'm missing my Nietzsche! I always try to look at his stuff during a presidential campaign to remind me of why I went through the damn fire."

Nixon might have resented the Franklins of the world for looking down on him as common, but he had no doubts about his own uncommonness. Not for nothing did he watch *Patton* over and over again: Here was the kind of *Übermensch* he believed himself to be. *Patton*, like *Beyond Good and Evil*, liberated his inner superman. Flying back to Washington with the movie fresh in his mind, he vowed to strike the enemy harder in Cambodia. "Cut the crap on my schedule," he said. "I'm taking over here. Troop withdrawal was a boy's job. Cambodia is a man's job."

A true herd politician respects the cattle. Nixon disdained them. He embraced the paternalist policies of liberalism's old

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guard precisely because his own private attitude was as patronizing and contemptuous as theirs. The cattle couldn't be expected to make it on their own; someone had to kick them. Nixon thought himself above the law for the same reason: Nietzsche's Borgia-worship set the psychic stage for Watergate, Nixon's *Götterdämmerung*.

In his self-conceit he belonged, not with the herd, but with the *aristoi*. Not, to be sure, with the Ivy League Brahmins—they were nothing. Nixon aspired rather to the Nietzschean club of heroic world-shapers. He flattered Mao as though the old man were chairman of the membership committee. "The chairman's writings moved a nation and have changed the world," Nixon said unctuously when he was admitted to the book-filled sanctum. Mao teased the over-eager applicant: "I've only been able to change a few places in the vicinity of Peking." When Mao hinted that they had got rid of the troublesome Lin Biao by arranging for his plane to crash, Nixon knew that he had made the grade. "The chairman can be sure," he said, "that whatever we discuss . . . nothing goes beyond the room." He was one of them.

To miss this element in the Nixonian fantasy is to miss the core. To raise the blood pressure of electoral cattle with culture-war politics was child's play. The morons on the White House staff could do that. Even Agnew could do that. The great object was to be a statesman after the fashion of Bismarck and Metternich, and to design a new balance of power for the planet. Plenty of presidents have used their diplomatic skills as an instrument in the service of their country. Nixon might have been the only one to use the country as an instrument in the service of his diplomatic skills.

Certainly the man who wanted to kick the universe and wrote a memo to himself about the "need for joy" was one of the most amusing men ever to occupy the White House. He altogether outstrips, with his dark, Caliban-Iago wit, such dreary villains as Harding and Buchanan. He raised the pettier forms of malice to the level of art; you come away from him with the perverse satisfaction you feel when a person with a bumper-sticker saying "mean people suck" gets pulled over by a cop. There is no need to justify a good book about Nixon—and *Nixonland* in many ways is a good book—by burdening it, as Perlstein does, with a dubious thesis. **NR**

Gathering Storm

Willful Blindness: A Memoir of the Jihad, by Andrew C. McCarthy (Encounter, 256 pp., $25.95)

BRUCE S. THORNTON

EIGHT years before the terrorist attacks on 9/11, Islamic jihadists sent America a wake-up call that most of us slept through. On February 26, 1993, a Ryder van containing a 1,400-pound urea-nitrate bomb exploded in the underground parking garage of the World Trade Center, killing six, injuring over a thousand, and inflicting half a billion dollars' worth of damage. As the subsequent investigation would reveal, a cell of jihadists living for several years in New York had executed the attack and was planning others against the U.N. building, the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels, and the New York headquarters of the FBI.

Andrew McCarthy, now at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, led the Justice Department team at the 1995 trial that ended in the conviction of nine terrorists and their "emir," Omar Abdel Rahman, the "Blind Sheikh." In *Willful Blindness*, McCarthy tells the story of the 1993 attack, the investigation of the jihadists, and the intricate, laborious process of indicting, trying, and ultimately convicting those we now know were merely the first wave of an Islamist army that has declared war on America. Along the way, McCarthy documents the bureaucratic bungling and political correctness that blinded investigators to the true aims of the terrorists and the jihad they were serving. Most important, he exposes the continuing folly of treating terrorists at war with America as criminal suspects

Mr. Thornton is a classicist at California State University, Fresno, and the author of numerous books, most recently *Decline and Fall: Europe's Slow-Motion Suicide*.

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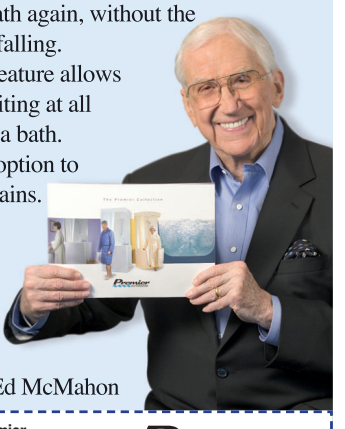

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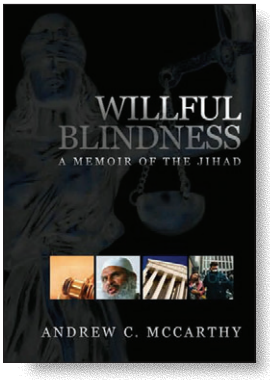
entitled to the hypersensitive legal solicitude barely appropriate even for ordinary crimes.

McCarthy's gripping narrative represents crime reporting at its best. He combines an eye for the telling detail with a seasoned prosecutor's skill at weaving intricate plot lines involving numerous suspects into a coherent and dramatic story. The most fascinating character in his tale is the undercover informant Emad Salem, a former Egyptian-army officer. This mercurial, cunning, but remarkably brave man had volunteered his services to the FBI—the big piece of luck that helped make it possible for the bombers of the World Trade Center to be apprehended and the later plot to be uncovered. One of the most dramatic moments in Salem's undercover work took place when the informant, who had a recording device in a briefcase, attended a meeting with Abdel Rahman. He held the case up "near the sightless cleric's face, careful not to let it sway even slightly lest his sharp ears pick up the creaking sound, yet praying that no one would barge in and tell Abdel Rahman what he was doing." The recording proved critical for the conviction of Abdel Rahman, who was caught on tape soliciting the bombing of American military installations.



Despite some mishandling by the FBI, and despite his self-aggrandizing stubbornness and occasional paranoid recalcitrance, Salem's tenacity and courage saved thousands of American lives. And he could have prevented the bombing of the WTC in 1993—except that he had been relieved of his duties by the FBI a few months before the attack. Concerned for his own and his family's safety, he had refused to abide by what McCarthy calls the "completely unrealistic protocols" designed to protect the agency from liability should something go wrong. His resistance on this point led the FBI to conclude, McCarthy reports, that despite the intelligence Salem had provided suggesting that a major bombing was being planned, "the sly, untamable informant [might be] more trouble than he was worth." The more he resisted FBI control, the greater was "the temptation to rationalize that maybe the threat had been wildly overblown." Along with Salem, the agency "lost his access to the battalions of Islam, and soon lost its interest in the battalions of Islam."

Numerous other errors contributed to our intelligence agencies' failure to see what was unfolding under their noses. Sayyid Nosair was a follower of Abdel Rahman who regularly associated with some of the eventual WTC bombers. Galvanized by Abdel Rahman's continual calls for jihadist action rather than talk, in November 1990 Nosair murdered Jewish Defense League founder Meir Kahane in New York. Nosair was wounded by a Postal Police officer and apprehended, but—in an egregious example of jury malfeasance—was acquitted of murder, even as he was convicted, reports McCarthy, "of assault and coercion in the course of the shootings for which [the jury] had exonerated him, and unlawful possession of the firearm proved beyond cavil to have fired at all three victims." Nosair immediately entered what McCarthy calls "the pantheon of iconic jihad warriors," and a steady stream of jihadists—including the WTC plotters—trekked to his jail cell in Attica.

As McCarthy writes, "it required no intensive scrutiny . . . to grasp that Nosair was part of something bigger than himself." If nothing else, the "47 boxes of documents, photographs, ballistics, and other items" seized by the police from Nosair's home and work locker would have revealed the extent of the jihadist conspiracy that would culminate three years later in the WTC bombing. Yet, ignoring this mountain of evidence, the New York police department and the FBI both decided that the Kahane murder had been carried out by a "lone, deranged gunman" (as the NYPD's chief of detectives put it). In conformity with Western determinist superstitions, Nosair's actions were attributed to Prozac, his unfulfilling menial jobs, and a workplace accident. The "mountain of evidence seized from Nosair's home," which included cassettes of Nosair's "bantering with Abdel Rahman about Egyptian breeding habits and paramilitary training for jihad," were simply ignored. But the most significant and foreboding evidence left unexamined was a detailed notebook in which Nosair asserted the need "to break and to destroy the morale of the enemies of Allah" by "exploding the structure of their civilized pillars," including "their high world buildings which they are proud of."

Worse yet, before the '93 bombing, the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force, searching for evidence that would corroborate Salem's information and justify a wiretap, ignored those same 47 boxes, whose contents included "reams of documents describing bomb construction and detonation; assassination techniques; the duty to perform jihad; the destruction of America's skyscrapers and political symbols," and much else. "This information," McCarthy writes, "was treated as if it didn't exist." The result was the loss of an opportunity to apprehend the World Trade Center bombers before their attack.

Something else, however, blinded the authorities, and many other Americans as well, to the enemy within: a failure to take seriously the terrorists' religious motivations and the role of jihad in Islamic theology. Abdel Rahman was no nutty cult leader like David Koresh, whose beliefs were obvious distortions of Christianity. Abdel Rahman had a doctorate, with distinction, in Koranic studies from Cairo's famed al-Azhar University, the Islamic equivalent of Harvard or Oxford. As McCarthy's brief analysis of jihadist doctrine illustrates, Abdel Rahman's preaching on jihad was completely in line with traditional orthodoxy as set out in the Koran, the Hadith, the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and the work of such later theorists as the 13th-century traditionalist Ibn Taymiyyah. Yet, like many Americans and apologists today, an analyst for the government waved this tradition away and indulged in fantasies about the "lesser jihad" and the "greater jihad"—the latter, defined as internal self-improvement and growth in faith, considered the true jihad. Unfortunately, as McCarthy notes, "many hundreds of millions of Muslims did not get the memo": They continue to believe that jihad means exactly what Mohammed and 14 centuries of mainstream Islamic belief think it means—war against the infidel.

This jihadist ideology motivated Abdel Rahman and the 9/11 jihadists, and contin-

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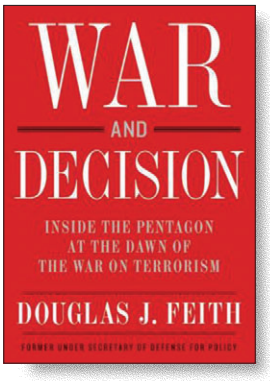
ues to motivate Islamic terrorism today. But, then and now, this obvious traditional belief is ignored or rationalized away by those entrusted with our security: The secretary of state publicly croons that Islam is the "religion of peace and love," and the State and Homeland Security departments instruct their employees not to use words like "jihad" or "mujahedeen" (holy warrior) in their communications. In contrast to this delusional thinking, McCarthy bluntly, and correctly, states the obvious: "Islam is a dangerous creed. It rejects core aspects of Western liberalism: self-determination, freedom of choice, freedom of conscience, equality under the law." We refuse to face the truth about Islam, and thus we disarm ourselves before "a doctrine that rejects our way of life and a culture unwilling or unable to suppress the savage element it breeds wherever it takes hold."

The power of the jihadists' spiritual motivations is what makes the law-enforcement approach to terrorism so dangerous and ineffective. As McCarthy persuasively argues, providing terrorists with the protections arising from legal principles the terrorists themselves disdain is folly. Unlike the judicial system, the purpose of national-security work is not to inhibit the government from violating the rights of its citizens, but rather to protect the lives of its citizens from enemies who want to destroy them and their freedom. Yet "terrorism prosecutions create the conditions for failure, and thus for more terrorism." Disclosure rules, for example, put into the hands of the enemy "a staggering quantum of information," much of it disastrous for the government's ability to gather intelligence, but highly useful for terrorists still at large. Throw in the lengthy trials and even lengthier appeals, and it is no wonder that in the eight years between the two World Trade Center bombings, fewer than three dozen of the hundreds of active jihadist terrorists had been put out of action by criminal prosecution.

Our refusal to acknowledge the true nature of the enemy and the appropriate methods for defeating him suggests that too many Americans are still asleep, even seven years after the carnage of 9/11. Fortunately for us, Andrew McCarthy is wide awake, and he sounds the alarm in this brilliantly written, relentlessly argued book. **NR**

War and Indecision



War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism, by Douglas J. Feith (Harper, 688 pp., $27.95)

BING WEST

THIS book, an analytical description of a dysfunctional National Security Council and disloyal senior officials, will be studied for years by journalists, historians, and aspiring political appointees. Sharp insights are scattered through its more than 600 pages—which are structured as a careful legal brief, forcing the reader to sift for the many nuggets.

Former undersecretary of defense Douglas Feith comes across as a serious policy wonk, both highly educated and dedicated to the proposition that the internal logic of a theory or policy position should persuade the reader and guide government. Not for him the breezy style of books where sources who remember conversations from years past slyly offer juicy gossip. Instead, half of the book is a convincing refutation of unfair allegations about the author. The other half presents a balanced analysis of policy debates about Iraq inside the administration between mid-2001 and mid-2004, including copious footnotes and copies of documents. While the structure and length of *War and Decision* may deter the casual reader, its hefty substance convincingly sets forth three important narratives.

Mr. West's third book on Iraq, *The Strongest Tribe: War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq*, will be published by Random House in August.

First, poisonous leaks by senior officials corroded trust inside the administration and damaged its public image. Feith cites leak after leak aimed at undercutting him personally, the Defense Department in general, and the neoconservative political philosophy. The Bush administration was systematically undercut and trashed by its own senior officials. President Bush, who bragged he did not read newspapers, and his NSC adviser, Condoleezza Rice, tolerated this disloyalty—and paid the price, in plummeting public approval and increasing political opposition.

The press eagerly accepted anonymous stories heaping contempt on the neocons. Feith marshals evidence rebutting previous allegations that he conducted secret intelligence operations to undercut the CIA, that the Pentagon insisted on placing Ahmed Chalabi in charge of Iraq, and that the Pentagon was opposed to a State Department plan for reconstruction. Unfortunately, Feith's effort will probably be to little avail: Facts rarely change ideological attitudes. The leakers effectively appealed to the liberal instincts of many journalists to shape narratives around presumed political philosophies. Once Feith, Wolfowitz, and Rumsfeld were branded with the scarlet word "neocon," the substance of their positions—and the credibility of the leaks denigrating them—became secondary. In hundreds of pages, Feith lays out the case that CIA and State officials, disagreeing with Bush's policies, impugned so-called neocons in order to enlist the press. Journalists who pride themselves on healthy skepticism should read this book to understand how they can be played. As for the disloyal officials, Feith argues they should have resigned honorably, instead of putting a knife in someone's back.

Potential political appointees should read the book and ask themselves how they would react in Feith's circumstances. Feith depicts Rumsfeld as a crafty, anti-ideological manager and intellectual counter-puncher with "Boy Scout" principles of honor that included not leaking to the press. Loyally obeying his boss, Feith

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didn't fight back the way his mentor, Richard Perle, had fought in the 1980s. "I now see more clearly," Feith wrote, "the intense animus behind the systematic leaking and 'backgrounding' that undermined President Bush and others who supported him. Our failure—as targets—to heed the attack, to protest it, and to fight back, was a form of unilateral disarmament that did not serve the interests of the president, the country, or truth."

The second theme that emerges from the book is that of a dysfunctional NSC system. According to Feith, "Rice worked to spare the president having to decide between clear-cut, mutually exclusive options." Before the war, Bush had approved a plan to place an Iraqi interim government in charge once Saddam was removed. When Baghdad fell, though, State and CIA feared Chalabi would gain power and proposed a multiyear transition. When Amb. Paul Bremer left for Baghdad, the Pentagon believed the president had ordered a quick handover to Iraqis; Bremer believed he was to remain in charge indefinitely. "Among Garner, Khalilzad, Bremer, Powell, Rumsfeld, and Rice," Feith writes, "there was not a common, clear understanding of what the president wanted done."

In chapter after chapter, the book describes an administration where the principals excelled at identifying the defects in any plan and were spared the discipline of having to agree to one course of action and see it through. Gen. Tommy Franks denied that his Central Command and the 170,000 soldiers had any role in Iraq's reconstruction. Rumsfeld warned that "Yankee can-do" initiative deprived other countries of incentives to pull their own weight. Powell urged a "go slow" approach in Iraq. Bremer reported to Bush, Powell, and Rumsfeld, and spoke to Rice almost daily. This meant, Feith writes, that Bremer "effectively had no boss. This was not how the interagency process was supposed to work."

The third—and perhaps accidental—theme of the book is the contradiction it depicts between the NSC deliberations and the war that was raging. President Bush views himself as decisive, but to others around him he is an enigma. In Feith's book, the NSC principals treat the tribal, sectarian, religious, and extremist currents roiling Iraq as intellectual problems that can be resolved by wise senior officials armed with video-teleconferencing machines. Feith did make a two-day visit to Iraq. "In August of 2003 I traveled to Iraq for the first time," he writes. "It is valuable for any top policy official to visit the theater of operations. One can never be reminded often enough that national-security policy is ultimately about human beings."

The human beings who were killing American soldiers had motivations that eluded the policymakers and couldn't be grasped in short visits. Feith writes that before the war, he never saw a CIA assessment warning that the Baathists would organize an insurgency, let alone ally with foreign jihadists. The NSC principals didn't see the train coming that ran over them. Feith points out that on one hand he wasn't sure what the president's policy goals were, while on the other hand Rumsfeld excluded the Pentagon policy shop from operational discussions with the military.

Policy goals, however uninformed, are supposed to inform the selection of a war-making strategy. That didn't happen during the Iraq War. An insurgency grows from the bottom up, illustrating Tolstoy's view that the collective, inchoate will of the people shapes the course of a nation's history and is indifferent to discussions in the king's palace. Washington existed inside its own bubble, showing insufficient humility in the face of a fiendishly complex war. The interagency process in Washington concocted and debated policy theories, explained at length by Feith, that were disconnected from decisions, sensible or otherwise, about military strategy.

These high-level discussions didn't influence insurgent actions. In April 2004, President Bush, having ordered the Marines, against their better judgment, to seize Fallujah—a fractious city of 300,000—stopped the assault midway to permit a 24-hour negotiation. Feith describes how, at the NSC level, the battle for Fallujah was discussed in the context of political theories—how to placate the Sunnis, how to handle Sadr, etc. At the time, I was with a Marine commander whose battalion had gained momentum by breaking through a heavily defended city block, only to be halted by the cease-fire. The battalion held on to that block, beating off attacks for 14 more days, while the NSC—as Feith recounts—deliberated, before calling off the attack altogether.

The NSC became too wrapped up in itself, forgetting that the course of battle is determined by the spirit of those doing the fighting, and that the first duty of leaders is to take care of their men. One pores over Feith's book looking for the decisions that made a difference in the war. Feith was too much the gentleman to title his book *War and Indecision*. But aside from the decision to hand over the keys to the kingdom to Bremer, it is hard to identify any NSC decision through mid-2004 that affected events on the ground. Feith describes interminable debates inside the NSC about Iraqi attitudes toward sovereignty and the role of expatriates. "But none of these judgments," he concludes, "had any reality outside the subjective thoughts of the officials who asserted them."

That, unfortunately, is a fitting epitaph for the NSC during the early years of the war in Iraq. **NR**

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■ FILM ■

Leo ex Machina

ROSS DOUTHAT

THE first time I tried to read *The Chronicles of Narnia* from start to finish, I gave up somewhere in the middle third of *Prince Caspian*—after the long flashback to the prince's childhood in his usurping uncle's court, but before the Pevensie children finished wandering (and wandering, and wandering) in circles through the Narnian woods. This was a temporary setback to my Narniaphilia, and many re-readings later I can testify that *Caspian* has more virtues than I apprehended at the age of seven. But even now it remains my least favorite volume in C. S. Lewis's saga, which in turn made it the *Chronicles* book that I was the most sanguine about seeing released to the tender mercies of the Hollywood blockbuster machine.

The good news is that the machine—embodied in this case by Andrew Adamson, who's done better by Narnia than his past association with the execrable *Shrek* franchise had led me to expect—has made something entertaining out of it. The bad news is that the result bears only a superficial resemblance to the sort of stories Lewis told. *Prince Caspian* is an epic fantasy rather than an intimate one—clanking rather than charming, martial rather than theological, and designed for teenagers (the core of the ticket-buying public, after all) instead of the children Lewis wrote for. In certain respects it's a better film than the more faithful adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* a few years back. But it's a strikingly less *Narnian* film, sacrificing the particularities of the book that it's adapting to create a considerably more generic entertainment.

Adamson's best decision is to start the movie in midstream, dispensing with the novel's layer of flashback and dropping us immediately into Narnia. A thousand years have passed since the last movie, and the country has been overrun by the swarthy, conquistadorish Telmarines; the "Old Narnians"—talking beasts, dwarves, and so on—survive in hidden communities deep within the forests, their very existence denied by the Telmarine rulers. The film kicks off with a woman screaming in childbirth—the first of many deliberately adult touches in a movie that barely slips in at PG—as she bears a son for Miraz (Sergio Castellitto), the villainous Lord Protector who's holding the Telmarine throne in trust for his nephew Caspian (Ben Barnes). In trust, that is, until he has an heir of his own, at which point Miraz means to kill the prince and clear a path to the throne for his own issue.

Caspian is unsophisticated enough not to see this coming, but his kindly tutor, Cornelius (Vincent Grass), alerts him to the danger, and he flees the palace one step ahead of his uncle's assassins. Taking refuge in the forest, he falls in with a trio of Old Narnians and eventually assumes the leadership of the Narnian resistance; along the way, he blows a magical, help-summoning horn that Cornelius has bestowed upon him, which yanks the Pevensies off an English railway platform and back into Narnia.

The four children—Peter (William Moseley), Susan (Anna Popplewell), Edmund (Skandar Keynes), and Lucy (Georgie Henley)—are only a year older than they were in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, since time passes considerably more slowly in our world than in Narnia. (The actors, though, are three years older, and time has improved their dramatic chops, though at the cost of mitigating Lucy's cuteness.) In England, they were struggling to adjust to being schoolchildren again, rather than the kings and queens that they had become; back in Narnia, they have to struggle to adjust to their status as Arthurian-style legends in a land that's become "a more savage place than you remember," as a brooding Old Narnian puts it.

The movie plays up these tensions; indeed, it plays up every tension it finds in Lewis's novel, and invents several more, creating rivalries (between Peter and Caspian), generating romances (between Susan and Caspian), adding battles (particularly a long set piece in the movie's middle, in which the Old Narnians launch a raid on Miraz's castle), and doubling down on the political intrigue in the Telmarine court. For the most part, the additions serve their purpose, transmuting a somewhat slight children's adventure into a gripping medieval war picture: *Braveheart* with more magic, or Tolkien with talking squirrels.

But this achievement comes with a price—namely, the evisceration of Lewis's major theme. If *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is a story about rebirth and renewal—Aslan resurrected, and spring cracking the ice of an enchanted winter—then *Prince Caspian* is fundamentally a story about re-enchantment, and the glorious return of the supernatural forces that the Telmarines have repressed. Little of this survives in Adamson's adaptation; it's been pruned away to make room for battles and arguments and longing glances and one-liners. The book's climax, in which the trees and rivers come to life and a wild pagan rout overruns the sterile secularism of Telmarine society, is reduced to a brief battlefield intervention that rips off not one but two scenes in *Lord of the Rings*. Aslan, too, is reduced to a walk-on role, sweeping in once the body count has climbed and the CGI budget been exhausted to roar a halt to the proceedings. He murmurs about faith, in the voice of Liam Neeson, but he feels less a Christ figure than a strikingly flimsy plot device: *Leo ex machina*.

The bad news for Narniaphiles is that this may be the only way that C. S. Lewis can plausibly be adapted, given the economics (and biases) of contemporary Hollywood—with the metaphysics downplayed and the Generic Epic elements accentuated, the better to justify the price tag that comes attached to any fantasy film. (A still more drastic operation was performed on *The Golden Compass*, Philip Pullman's atheist fairy tale, during the transition from page to screen last year.) But judging from *Caspian*'s middling box-office showing to date, it might be worth considering something different for *Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and (one hopes) its sequels: half the budget, perhaps, and a little more fidelity to the elements of theme and plot that make Narnia something more than an entertaining but two-dimensional imitation of Tolkien's Middle Earth. **NR**

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■ CITY DESK ■

Phone Purgatory

RICHARD BROOKHISER

I LIKE where I live. I live in the capital of the world. I work, vote, and pay city income tax here. I watch the passage of the seasons from the window over my desk; the treetops in the little park, so recently bare, then fuzzy, now present a square carpet of green.

I like where I live. I go to our valley to grow asparagus, pay property taxes, and drop a dollar in the boot held by the volunteer fireman when he stands in the middle of the road collecting donations. I watch the passage of the seasons from the window over my desk. "The sprightly nymph and naked grace / The mazy dance together trace."

I like some of the places I don't live. The bus that takes me back and forth is no one's idea of home, but it is clean and punctual; in the rocking cradle of a bus seat I have written many pieces, including this one.

I greatly dislike one place I don't live, yet spend a lot of my time: on the phone, dealing with customer service. Perhaps we have crossed paths there, coming and not going. If we are phone-limbo paisans, then you know the custom of the country. A voice greets you, perky, female, and artificial. The Android's Hispanic sister breaks in to say that if you want to continue in *español*, press *numero dos*. Mistress returns to ask you to select from the following options, and to please listen to the entire menu because our options have changed. Your conversation, the Smiley East German finishes, may be recorded for purposes of quality control.

Then like stout Cortez with eagle ears you listen to the Pacific. The next five minutes of your life, or ten, or thirty, or sixty, hang in the balance. The Tibetan Book of the Dead warns the son of noble family that at the moment of death he will be beset by terrifying spirits. At the living death of waiting for the next available agent to assist you, you are played Muzak. I suppose they test these selections to determine their efficacy in satisfying consumers. Keep testing, you haven't found the groove yet. Upbeat pop is the worst, but even the Chopin waltz I once heard became jackhammers after two encores. After some minutes of this you are finally given to a real person. Or perhaps not.

I recently had an experience with a company whose identity shall not be revealed, which merits description. The first moves passed like speed chess. Then came the pause of the void. Quite a pause—a quarter of an hour, though I won't swear to it, because in such situations one checks the clock only after one is well in. Then came a person: female, middle-aged. We discussed the assistance I sought, then she put me on hold. This pause also lasted a quarter of an hour. I had a newspaper; I read it. I was near my computer. E-mail; a little Mickey, a little Terry; what's Kathryn up to? By the time I met my second person I was in John Bolton mode, diplomatic but stern. This is what I need, this is what hasn't been happening, could you please tell your supervisor, and don't put me on hold. I had this conversation with a no-nonsense New York voice, of a kind that is increasingly rare even here. "I don't put people on hold," he rasped, and switched me promptly to the man in tech support who would be able to help.

Even the Chopin waltz I once heard became jackhammers after two encores. After some minutes of this you are finally given to a real person. Or perhaps not.

That man had a true tech-support voice; you could hear the screwdrivers hanging off his belt. Except he had no idea why I had been sent to him. There was no "work ticket" related to my problem. If I'd known I had needed a ticket, I would have bought one at the door. I kept asking if I could be sent to someone who would know why I was being sent to him, but Tech-man kept going back to the missing "work ticket." At last, his repetitive-motion answers suggested an idea: Could he simply send me back to the person who had sent me on to him? I entered the third pause, this one broken by recorded messages telling other customers of the company in far-flung places—Rahway, Spokane—how they might apply technical first-aid to their problems—not an encouraging sign. Finally I was connected, not to Mr. Gravel-in-a-Bucket, but to a young lady in East Asia. It was time to stop meeting like this. I told her that if I could not speak with a supervisor, I would not give the company $29.99 a month. She promised to get one if I would stay on hold. I gave her my number and said the supervisor could call me. She called back herself in a few minutes to say that her supervisor said my problem could be smoothed away for a one-time payment of $49. So we parted.

I am both passive and short-fused, and this situation was extraordinary. Granted, granted, and granted. But we have all been here, more or less. The service economy feels like the no-service economy. Why?

The effort it takes to reach anybody, or, having reached him, to get action, epitomizes a general sclerosis and irresponsibility. Whether the original sin is bureaucracy, understaffing, or fecklessness, nothing gets done, and no one takes the blame for it. As goes customer service, so goes Katrina.

Unless cohorts of willing assistants are the mark of undeveloped societies. Slaves and servants fill literature from *Beowulf* to Naipaul. Even Big Business and Big Labor carried feudal forms into the capitalist millennium. But when more of us are on our own, there will be fewer of us to fetch and carry.

Human interaction is itself a relic. Our goal is to have universal access to the relevant switch-points via keystrokes and thumb clicks. Then everyone will be able to do everything, and it will truly take forever. **NR**

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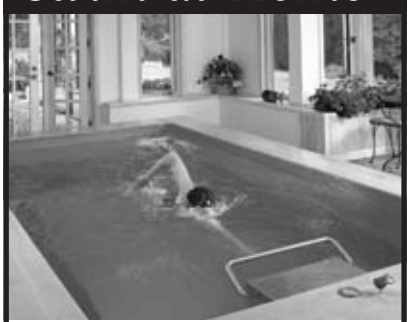

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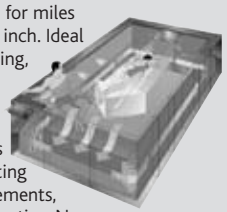

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Dethroned

THE conventional wisdom on the Clintons was promulgated by my then-senator, Bob Smith of New Hampshire, back at the end of the impeachment trial. "He's won," said Senator Smith, after dutifully if vainly casting his vote to nail Slick Willie's puffy butt. "He always wins. Let's move on."

They won through the Nineties. The Clintons' Democratic party was great for the Clintons, lousy for the Democratic party, which in the course of the decade lost Senate seats, House seats, governors' mansions, state legislatures, and on and on, until, in a final snook cocked at his comrades, Bill Clinton was unable to bequeath the White House to his vice president in a time of peace and prosperity—but his wife, campaigning for her first political office, managed to pick up a Senate seat in a state she'd barely spent 20 minutes in.

Yet even iron rules have their exceptions. This time the Clintons won't win. And it's the Democratic machine that wants to move on—notwithstanding that in the past three months former president-presumptive Rodham has won more votes from actual Democratic voters than Senator Obama, a weak candidate being propelled in slow motion across the finish line, the sputtering engine of his "inevitability" frantically augmented by media bobbysoxers pushing at the rear.

Mrs. Clinton protested that it's not unusual for presidential nominations to still be unsettled in June, but by way of example she cited Robert Kennedy getting assassinated at the California primary and everyone pounced on her as a deranged psychopath fantasizing about some sicko taking out Barack before the big Puerto Rico vote. The Obama campaign immediately issued a statement saying that her comment was "unfortunate and has no place in this campaign." Even for a thin-skinned solipsistic narcissist, Obama seems a frightful po-faced pill. This could be a long eight years. At least when Bill Clinton used to deplore "the politics of personal destruction" he seemed self-aware enough to get the joke.

We all know what Hill was getting at. Maybe she'd have got a better press if she'd just said, "Geez, 40 years ago, no one was yelling at RFK saying, 'C'mon, couldn't you get assassinated within six weeks of New Hampshire instead of dragging it out till summer?'" As things

Senator-queen

stand, she's the only candidate anyone wants dead. *The Economist* said senior Dems "have advised Mrs Clinton to retire to her room with a glass of whisky and a loaded revolver." And, in case she's reluctant to pull the trigger, MSNBC's Keith Olbermann advised sending an accompanying heavy—"somebody who can take her into a room and only he comes out." And, instead of droning that Hillary death porn has "no place in this campaign," Senator Clinton just grinned and bore it.

Meanwhile, Barack Obama staggers from gaffe to gaffe like Dan Quayle Karaoke Night and nobody minds. Appearing in Sunrise, Fla., the senator bellowed at the crowd: "How's it going, Sunshine? . . . It's good to be in Sunshine," and a quartet of similar municipal invocations. But so what? He's the "Sunshine Superman" (*Billboard* Number One for Donovan, 1966). Whereas for Mrs. Clinton it's "Sunrise, Sunset" (*Fiddler on the Roof*, round about the same time—in honor of her closing gaffe, all this column's pop-culture references are from the Bobby Kennedy era).

Sunrise, sunset, swiftly flow the days: Go back a year to the early campaign material. In those first regal videos, she assumed Bob Smith's rule would hold and that her dynastic claim—the divine right of consorts—would be sufficient. She campaigned, like Natalie Portman's character in *Star Wars*, as a queen playing a senator. Six months later, she was a harpy up on stage shrieking into the mike against the hard shellac of Barack's cool.

Too late, she found a kind of voice, kidding with Bill O'Reilly and playfully suggesting Rush had always had a crush on her. I've grown quite sweet on her myself. The lioness in winter is a more sympathetic character than she ever was a decade back, when the tide of presidential, ah, DNA was lapping ever higher and that old sob sister from the Arkansas swamps, Dale Bumpers, was doing his maudlin shtick in the well of the Senate and insisting that the first family was a-hurtin'. Who knew? They might be a-hurtin'. Or they might be a-roarin' their heads off laughing at us saps for eating up such a prime slab of Razorback ham. The truth about the Clintons' freaky relationship is as unknowable as the truth about the arranged marriages of royal houses in medieval Europe.

Still, there must surely, in these latter years, have been an element of bargain about it. Mrs. Clinton stood by her man, and he in turn was supposed to work his magic on her political ambitions. When it came to his end of the deal, Bill, not for the first time (see the Starr Report), failed to reciprocate. In these pages way back in 1999, I compared Hill to Ethel Merman in the finale of *Gypsy*, alone onstage singing, "This time for me!" She has the same tatty burlesque pathos. But the crowd moved on—to this year's Clintonian schmoozer, less sullied, more liberal, cooler identity group. As Lanny Davis conceded to Laura Ingraham re the media's Obama swoon, she now knows what it feels like to be a Republican. **NR**

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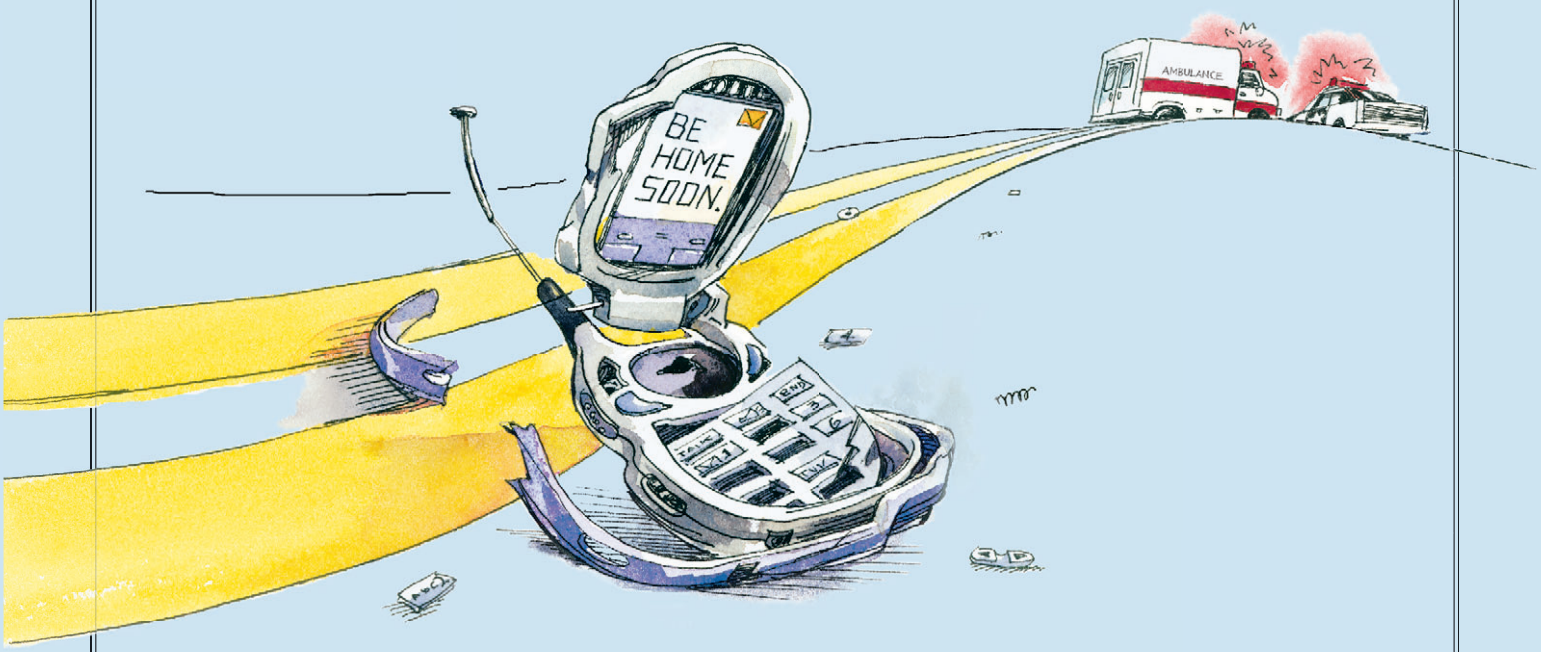
Nearly one third of teens admit to texting while driving.

SOME OF THEM WILL NEVER BE HEARD FROM AGAIN.



Car crashes are the leading cause of death among American teens. **Is any text message worth that risk?**

A recent survey showed that teens consider texting while driving to be extremely distracting. Texting not only takes their minds off the road but also takes their hands off the wheel.

Allstate has a few ideas to help curb the epidemic:

USE THE LAW.
Support state legislation banning digital distractions. The State of California has now banned anyone under the age of 18 from using cell phones, laptop computers, pagers or any text-messaging device while driving.

STRENGTHEN GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING (GDL) LAWS.
GDL laws put limitations on teen driving so kids can gain experience safely. Since North Carolina implemented one of the most comprehensive GDL laws in the country, it has seen a 25% decline in crashes involving 16-year-olds.

HAVE THE DRIVING TALK.
75% of teens surveyed said their parents would be the best influence in getting them to drive more safely. The Allstate Parent-Teen Driving Contract can help start the conversation. **Contact an Allstate Agent to get a copy or visit Allstate.com/teen for the interactive contract.**

Let's help teens realize the importance of giving the road their undivided attention.

It's time to make the world a safer place to drive.
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